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Spring 2001

Volume 6, Number 1

# Alternative Press REVIEW

YOUR GUIDE BEYOND THE MAINSTREAM



## THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS LIFE

Patrick Marley

## Don't Ask, Don't Tell: The Story We Weren't Allowed to Air

Jane Akre

## Group Sex: Communal Ethics of Eroticism, Free Love, and the Extended Family

Andy "Sunfrog" Smith

## Intifada 2000: The Palestinian Uprising

David Barsamian interviews Edward Said

## Plan Colombia

Noam Chomsky

## 12 Most Luddite Movies of All Time!



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## EDITORIAL

### Just Say "No" to Democracy

The outcome of the latest U.S. presidential electoral farce has been said by many commentators to cast suspicion on the legitimacy of the new regime of George W. Bush, and to limit his power to act in the name of the U.S. people. There is some small truth to this—especially for those adhering to the rival Democratic Party, who with much justification can consider the election to have been stolen from Al Gore by the Republican-stacked U.S. Supreme Court. However, in a wider sense, George W. Bush will govern in the name of the U.S. people with the same legitimacy as any other U.S. president to this day. This is because, whatever the particular contingencies of his elevation to the post of president, the presidential role and the role of the government remains the same: the rule of the powerful and wealthy elite over the vast mass of the relatively powerless and poor. Little has actually been changed by the elevation of Bush over Gore aside from a few details of policy that, though sometimes significant in themselves, more generally pale beside the mountain of commitments these men share.

There are thousands of ways for the powerful and wealthy to subvert people's wills and prevent them from governing their own communities themselves. The sum total of these methods constitutes what is usually termed "politics."

However there is a smaller subset of these methods, which has proven especially effective in modern industrial countries, requiring people's intentional participation in the subversion of their own wills. This subset is generally termed "political democracy" or "democratic politics."

Those of us throughout the world who live in so-called "democratic countries" have for the most part been carefully and thoroughly instructed in the ideology of political democracy from childhood. Many of us can recite some of the more important principles of this political democracy from memory—even without the benefit of any actual thought on the matter:

- ▲ Majority rule
- ▲ One person, one vote
- ▲ Vote for the party of your choice
- ▲ Free and fair elections
- ▲ Government with the consent of the governed
- ▲ No taxation without representation

Like other forms of political ideology, the success of democracy as a system of government (i.e. a system for the domination of people in general by powerful and wealthy elites) requires that most people in their everyday activities consider it legitimate. However, unlike most other forms of political ideol-

ogy, the legitimacy of political democracy rests not only on this, but on people's actual participation in the process of legitimization. As long as people can be convinced (through lifelong political indoctrination, through a school system that forbids its criticism, and through a mass media which constantly reinforces its themes) that they have a political or moral "duty" to participate in the electoral process (regardless of how empty, one-sided or corrupt it may be in actual practice), their participation legitimates this process both in their own minds and—as a mass, statistical phenomenon—for people in general.

Political democracy, thus, requires a more highly indoctrinated, more carefully controlled and more highly molded citizenry than other forms of government. It is, in a sense, a true but perverted form of self-government, meaning it is a form of (circumscribed and limited) popular participation in the very institutions by which people are dominated by the powerful and wealthy. This in turn means that even when the sordid, corrupt details of the electoral process get out of hand and are revealed for a change in the mainstream media, they are automatically and successfully characterized as anomalies of an otherwise legitimate process for those who have participated in the electoral process.

As a result, the biggest source of concern in this electoral fiasco for those whose power and wealth the U.S. state exists to protect is the growing number of people who refuse participation in electoral politics precisely because they refuse to grant this system of domination any legitimacy. It is these people who are increasingly targeted by the mass media for their alleged "anti-social" views and their threat to the stability of any potential regime taking hold

of the U.S. state.

For now, while the immense absolute number of non-voters continues to climb, the percentage of non-voters refusing the legitimacy of political democracy remains relatively small. However, with the threat that this percentage of intentional non-voters may increase as well, we can expect a continuing drum-beat of criticism from the mainstream media aimed at those they label "irresponsible" elements.

It is the role of genuinely radical, alternative media to continue to undermine the legitimacy of political democracy. Not just by pointing out that the ruling powers themselves have no commitment to democracy when it gets in their way, but by showing how political democracy itself is a system of domination that both prevents the development of self-regulating communities and serves as a cover for the continuing degradation of society and nature. — **Jason McQuinn**





# ALTERNATIVE PRESS REVIEW

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# Review

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*"The whirligig of time has its revenges."*  
-B.A.G. Fuller

## Alternative Press Notes

Welcome to the Spring 2001 issue of **Alternative Press Review**! We are publishing a couple of original articles on alternative culture in this issue. Adam Bregman reports on Italy's cultural underground in "Social Centers" and Patrick Marley explores the issue of freight-hopping in "The Other Side of This Life."

Other features include an in-depth interview with Edward Said on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Noam Chomsky delves into the economic and military interests behind "Plan Colombia" and Andy "sunfrog" Smith looks at the history and philosophy of 'free love' in "Group Sex: Communal Ethics of Eroticism, Free Love and the Extended Family."

Of particular interest to muckraking journalists is Jane Akre's story "Don't Ask, Don't Tell: The Story We Weren't Allowed to Air." This case and its implications for investigative journalists deserves far more attention that it has received from the mainstream corporate press.

We were forced to shorten the review

section considerably this time around because of the sheer amount and length of feature material that was included. Unfortunately, this meant that a substantial number of reviews were left out, especially with regard to the music review and zine review sections. We plan to expand the review section in our next issue so that we can include all the reviews that didn't get published this time.

A number of new and current subscribers have asked about the possibility of paying for subscriptions by credit card. We are not equipped to take credit card orders at this time, however, we are seriously looking into it. It is our hope we will be able to set up a system where subscribers will be able to order new subscriptions and pay for renewals by credit card in the near future. This includes making it possible to log on and subscribe or renew your subscription directly from the APR website ([www.altpr.org](http://www.altpr.org)). We hope to have this option available sometime later this year.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy the current issue. - **Tom Wheeler**

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### Submissions

Please enclose an adequate-sized self-addressed, stamped envelope with all articles, photos, and graphic art if you want it returned, or a 33c SASE if you want to receive a response. All other unsolicited submissions become the property of A.A.L. Press. We prefer that written submissions be typed and double-spaced; ASCII, WordPerfect or Word format by email or on 3.5" diskettes (PC compatible) are encouraged. Please do **not** send original artwork, send copies.

**Alternative Press Review** may edit submissions for grammar and style, although we always try to keep any editing to an absolute minimum.

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## Letters are welcome!

As many letters to *Alternative Press Review*—concerning appropriate topics of potential interest to readers—will be published as is possible given the space limitations of this format. All letters should be no more than one typed, double-spaced page (no longer than 600 words). For anything of greater length, please query first to see if there is any chance we will be able to publish it. Letters will include the writer's name, city and state, province or country, unless otherwise requested. Send all letters to *Alternative Press Review*, c/o A.A.L. Press, POB 4710, Arlington, VA 22204-4710

### SHOCKING REVIEW

Dear Jason McQuinn,  
It was shocking to read the review in the latest issue of *Alternative Press Review*. Not only did APR not find anything positive to say about *Democracy & Nature* (D&N), (at the very moment it is sparing no eulogies for various activist magazines that care for action for the sake of action with no deeper political insight on what they are doing), but it also engages in an obvious attempt to discredit the journal by stating that 'it is marred by the editor/publisher's insistence on getting in the first and last word on everything discussed in every issue'.

I would like to make the following comments with respect to this 'presentation' of D&N and I hope that APR

will not repeat in the future statements like the above one:

1. The reviewer calls D&N an 'academic' journal, obviously confusing an academic with a theoretical journal. D&N is a political journal aiming to create libertarian theory, so lacking in today's era of activism for the sake of activism. Its explicit aim is, according to the programmatic text OUR AIMS repeated in each issue, "to become the international forum for the new conception of inclusive democracy. However, although the conception of inclusive democracy is the guiding light in the journal's problematique, the journal will continue and expand its pluralistic character by discussing and contrasting alternative radical views."

2. The Editorial Board decided from the very beginning (and by the way, I am not a publisher as your reviewer (mistakenly?) keeps calling me but the editor of D&N—something that makes a lot of difference) that although the project of inclusive democracy was 'the guiding line' in our problematique, we did not nevertheless wish to engage in a monologue, as is usually the case on the occasions when a new political project is proposed (see for instance CNS, the Green Perspectives etc) but to engage in dialogue with other trends in the broad Left. Dialogue, however, means that we have to assess critically alternative views from the perspective of the Inclusive Democracy project and this is what I've done in the editorials—not because I

wanted to get 'in the first and last word on everything discussed in every issue', as your reviewer states in its distorting 'presentation' of D&N, but because otherwise the journal would indeed have ended up as an academic one involved in presenting various contradictory viewpoints with no problematique of its own. However, we explicitly stated in our AIMS that 'Authors will be offered the opportunity to counter comment on editorial comments relating to the political viewpoint of their articles, in the dialogue section of the issue following the publication of the article'. And had your reviewer followed the journal systematically over the years he would have seen that we kept our promise strictly and that the Dialogue section has been continually expanding.

3. We did not expect any praise from APR but did at least expect a factual presentation, and it is ironic that the D&N's editor attempt to express the journal's political perspective with respect to the various views it presents in a pluralistic way (inviting a dialogue with the authors on the critical assessment of their views) is unscrupulously attacked at the very moment that APR, (which is supposed not to express any specific political project but to be engaged in an 'objective' presentation of the alternative publications around), makes defamatory comments, with no possibility of a dialogue on them. I would like therefore to believe that in the next issue you will amend the situation because, if such shameful comments are

repeated, there cannot obviously be any basis for the continuation of our exchange agreement.

Takis Fotopoulos  
Democracy & Nature, Editor  
20 Woodberry Way  
London N12 OHG

Dear Takis Fotopoulos,

*I can't speak for the other editors of APR, especially since I don't always share their perspectives, but I know that my own preference is for publications that include both theoretical and practical perspectives. You won't very often see me cheering on purely activist magazines, especially if they don't have any substantial theoretical grounding. So I'll agree with you that much too often "libertarian theory...[is] lacking in today's era of activism for the sake of activism." However, be that as it may, I'm not overly excited by academically-oriented theoretical journals with little relevance for radical political movements, either.*

*I'm surprised that you were "shocked" by my review of D&N in APR. It's not like I didn't accurately describe what the publication is like for those who might wish to read it. Although the journal may not be formally affiliated with an academic institution, it is certainly not just a theoretical journal with no trappings of academicism. In the first place, the majority of the contributors seem to clearly be academics, whether professors or students. And besides this, the tones, styles and content of most essays included tends to be very academic and off-putting to*



anyone like me who would prefer some theoretical writing aimed at the general radical reader rather than at an academically-ensconced audience.

After clearly describing *Democracy and Nature* as "a 160-page academic journal (formerly *Society and Nature*) which seeks to create a radical democratic synthesis of traditions of socialist (economic), political and ecological democracy, placing it on the borderline of anarchist theory shared with anti-state environmentalist, directly democratic and libertarian socialist positions," and going on to list themes of two issues, and titles of two major articles to give APR readers an idea of the journal's specific content, I did conclude with one sentence mentioning that "Unfortunately, the journal is marred by the editor/publisher's insistence on getting in the first and last word on everything discussed in every issue." I stand corrected that you are the editor and not the editor/publisher of the journal. However, the rest of my cautionary remark remains completely correct for the issues reviewed, as any reader of the journal will find for his or herself. The reason I mentioned that you insist on getting the "first and last word on everything discussed" is not because I oppose any desire for dialogue, but because that is what you do in a manner that becomes overkill for those reading the journal. When you criticize the articles in your introductory essay, then criticize them again in your

remarks following them, and especially when you insist on publishing an unfinished draft version of an essay (against the author's wishes that you publish the final version) so that you can then destroy it in detail in your response, I think you've reached a clear point of overkill in your criticism. Dialogue is one thing, but this is quite another.

At any rate, it seems that you mistake a simple criticism of your personal editing style as a criticism of the journal itself, which was neither intended nor evident in my review. I in no way "unscrupulously attack" your "attempt to express the journal's political perspective," and your allegation that I have done so is one more suggestion that your journal might be better served by lightening up a little and taking yourself a little less seriously.

So please consider this dialogue my attempt to "amend the situation" with an explanation that no "shameful comments were made" in the review, only an honest evaluation. — Jason McQuinn

Hi APR,

My name is Garyn. I myself am vegan, but for a couple of reasons. The first reason I went vegan was because of what you call "morality". I'm sure that if you saw what happened behind the closed doors of a slaughter house that you might possibly go vegan. Man's actions behind these doors are hardly what man would call "animal instinct." They are more monstrous

than anything. Cruel acts in such a perverse, disgusting manner are hardly animal instinct, if this is the road that man is supposed to walk. Even true carnivores and omnivores do not compare to the brutal and inhumane acts that man does to animals. We also consume more than we need, and as far as non-vegetarian consumption goes, at levels that cause damage to the planetary balance. No other animal consumes as much food as we do. On top of that, what should be of influence to man, as it was to me, is how unhealthy meat and dairy products are. If you exclude the hormones that are unhealthy already and used to increase "product", consider the ever-growing theory of the damage that the saturated fat from meat and dairy cause to our digestive tracts. Meat-eating animals have a rather short and thick digestive tract that allow them to eat meat without causing them damage. Man, on the other hand, has a VERY long digestive tract that isn't as thick as a meat-eater's.

Regardless of whether or not man has eaten meat throughout its entirety, I'd like to think that one day, man will rise up and fight against this false education that we've been fed our whole lives and we start enforcing what's true (i.e., govt's do NOT maintain order, religions do NOT allow free-thought, over-consumption will eventually destroy us, and a vegan lifestyle is just plain healthier for man and is what we should have had in the first place, if we didn't.) I hope that what i said has

some impact on what you think, seeing as our future is far more important than our past. Let me know what you think.

Garyn

## VEGANISM, NO THANKS

*Editor's Note: There are many possible reasons for people to eat or not eat meat or other potential foods. Your letter is unclearly written, but as far as I can tell your major intention is to defend veganism as a moral imperative. However, your arguments are far from making such a case. In the first place, many people have seen slaughterhouses without becoming vegans. I wouldn't be the first to continue eating animal flesh even after seeing the generally terrible conditions which exist there.*

*Because horrible conditions exist in any particular institution does not mean that particular practices which take place both without and within those institutions should be abolished everywhere. A strong case can be made that no abattoirs should be allowed to exist which treat animals in ways which produce needless suffering or which demand that people work in sickening conditions. But this is an argument for institutional change, not for veganism as a moral choice. Nor does it make any sense to me for you to worry about whether or not (obviously not) people act because of "animal instinct" in slaughterhouses. The production, packaging, commodification, sale and consumption of processed food in industrial capitalist societies employs*



the use of very few "animal instincts" under the usual meaning of the phrase. It is a highly alienated, industrialized process in which animals are treated as raw materials and workers are treated as machines—both to be maximally exploited.

Nor do any of your further arguments make a case for exclusive veganism. You state that "We also consume more than we need," although it should be obvious that only some humans consume more than they need. Many other people around the world manage to live on less than excessive diets. While a not inconsiderable number are starving at any given time.

While the industrial food system often has devastating consequences for ecosystems, these consequences generally don't depend upon whether or not animals are involved. Both animal production and plant production in capitalist economies can and do harm the environment. A case can be made that some aspects of meat production are more harmful on a pound for pound basis than the production of plant foods. However, this is not uniformly the case, and many types of plant production can and do cause problems more severe than many types of meat production.

The consumption of meat and dairy products can be unhealthy when used to excess, especially in combination with sedentary lifestyles. However, once again this is not an argument for veganism. It is an argument for people to get up off their asses and change the

way they live, to abolish unhealthy institutions, and to consume more balanced diets. Someday, I hope to live to see vegans once and for all give up the completely bogus argument you present concerning the length of human intestines. This argument makes as little sense as other ridiculous, biologically-based pseudo-arguments like those claiming that homosexuality is unnatural, women are inferior, etc. Please realize that humans are omnivores in most places on this planet and that their intestines are completely capable of digesting a large range of plants and animal flesh without undue problems. Those who think that Nature has dictated how they must behave are deluding themselves where there are many obvious choices that all include a range of potential consequences.

Finally, I will agree that vegan diets can be healthier than many, if not most diets now followed in highly-fattened, industrial capitalist societies. But there are many other dietary options that are just as healthy as veganism (or moreso in many instances). And none of these diets is in some sense objectively better than any of the others in all situations.

Morality is a human invention and can take as many forms as there are human beings. Some diets are more healthy in some situations for some people, and other diets are more healthy in other situations

or for other people. The most important thing to remember is that no one has any right to prescribe what other people can and cannot eat. — Jason McQuinn

# SUBVERSIVE MAGAZINE

Hey Tom!

Great job on APR Fall 2000! By far the best yet! "Unrestrained Stories" and the "Medical Marijuana" blurb got me really anyway

(that's a good thing). The excerpt from *Rogue State*, *Working for the Man*, etc., almost every selection is perfect—and bundled together—its the most subversive mag I've seen in awhile. I must admit earlier issues of APR seemed a little unsure as if you really didn't fully know where to go with it. But the Fall 2000 issue hits hard in a lot of important places. Well done! Keep in touch and be well! Larry Nocella

# LIFE IS SHORT. THROW HARD.



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# Bits & Pieces

By Tom Wheeler

## THE UNABOMBER'S MEDIA PEN PALS

Last year, Ted Kaczynski donated 15,000 of his personal papers to the University of Michigan's *Labadie Collection*. Included in that collection are letters sent from people around the world. When the folks at **TheSmokingGun.com** went sniffing, they managed to unearth a stack of letters from media heavyweights seeking to nab an interview with Kaczynski. Sometimes the level of groveling reached comic proportions. When *60 Minutes II* producer Shawn Efran wrote Mr. Kaczynski, he attempted to woo him with some name-dropping (John Zerzan) and his reporting on the anarchist movement in Eugene, Oregon. "Your writings awakened in them a desire to smash down technological society by whatever means necessary and to return the world to its natural state. To them, you are a hero and a pioneer." writes Efran. Never mind that Zerzan and other critics of technology existed long before Kaczynski's writings became public. Apparently, this sort of fawning takes precedence over such mundane facts when you're attempting to butter-up someone for a prime-time interview. As if that wasn't enough, Efran also made quite an effort to distance his show from their sister program

*60 Minutes*: "Please understand that *60 Minutes II* is NOT (emphasis in the original letter) the program on which your brother and mother appeared...our story



will allow you to personally refute what they said about you." Also going negative against TV journalists were reporters in the print media with Portland Oregonian's Bryan Densen writing: "I suspect by now that every blow-dried TV phony in America has written you to beg

for an interview. I won't beg. You will find my pitch to you very specific. I have no ulterior motives. I don't want to write a book, don't want to make a movie. I only want to talk with you for about two hours about the environment, the natural world, wild nature." Others attempting to curry favor included Don Dahler of ABC's *Good Morning America* who hoped Kaczynski would "decide that it's in your better interests to explain yourself to the nation...the world...by using me." Producer Larry Ish from *The Rosanne Show* wrote Kaczynski of Rosanne's "non-conformist" attitude and his belief that together they would "hit it off." None of the letter writers were able to "hit it off" with Kaczynski.

## LEONARD PELTIER CRITICAL OF CLINTON PARDONS

Native American activist Leonard Peltier had harsh words for former President Clinton for granting pardons to his friends and political supporters while his own request for clemency was denied. "We can see who was granted clemency and why. The big donors to the president's campaign were able to buy justice, something we just couldn't afford," Peltier said in a statement



to his supporters. Peltier continues to languish in a federal prison in Leavenworth despite the efforts of human rights activists around the globe to free him and despite evidence unearthed over the years that Peltier may have been wrongly convicted of the murders of two FBI agents in 1975. The next step for Peltier will be an organized effort to pressure the U.S. government to declassify thousands of FBI documents that pertain to Peltier's case. Other declassified documents from the FBI revealed that they suppressed and concealed evidence favorable to Peltier. Some feel additional evidence of misconduct on the part of the FBI may be contained within those still secret documents.

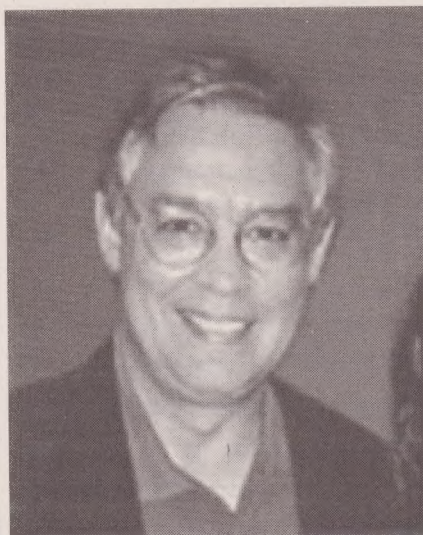
## **PACIFICA ATTEMPTS TO MUZZLE CRITICS**

In yet another attempt to bully its critics, the Pacifica Foundation has threatened to sue several websites critical of Pacifica. Three websites, [www.savepacificanet.net](http://www.savepacificanet.net), [www.wbai.net](http://www.wbai.net), and [www.wbaifree.org](http://www.wbaifree.org), have been served with letters by a law firm representing Pacifica demanding they abandon the use of their domain names and relinquish all rights to those names or face legal action. Pacifica claims these groups are violating trademark laws. Public Citizen has announced it will represent the groups if Pacifica sues. "We cannot sit by idly while corporations try to silence people using illegal intimidation tactics," Public Citizen President Joan Claybrook said in a press release. The law firm representing Pacifica is Epstein Becker & Green, P.C., a firm that openly brags about their efforts at smashing attempts by workers to unionize. Epstein Becker & Green attorney John Murdock currently sits on the board of directors of the Pacifica Foundation.

## **DEMOCRACY NOW! CO-HOST RESIGNS**

The ongoing crisis at Pacifica took yet another surprising turn. Juan Gonzalez, co-

host of Pacifica's most successful program, *Democracy Now!*, resigned in a dramatic on-air announcement on January 31st. Gonzalez opened the show with a blistering attack on Pacifica's board of directors and management and recounted the sordid history of harassment, firings and bannings of staff members, and the muzzling of free speech at the station. He also noted the recent attacks on his co-host Amy Goodman and the 'Christmas Coup' at WBAI which resulted in numerous unexplained firings and bannings from the



**Juan Gonzalez**

New York station. "I've come to the conclusion that the Pacifica board has been hijacked by a small clique that has more in common with modern-day corporate vultures than with working-class America," Gonzalez said. Gonzalez also urged listeners to take back Pacifica Radio from this small clique and announced a national campaign to oust the current leadership. He has pledged to devote his energies to the new campaign which will include a nationwide boycott of donations to Pacifica until the board resigns or is removed. Listeners wishing to join the campaign can contact [PacificaCampaign@yahoo.com](mailto:PacificaCampaign@yahoo.com). Pacifica's Washington, D.C. station, WPFW, censored most of Gonzalez's state-

ment, cutting away to taped programming.

## **A DIFFERENT WORLD IS POSSIBLE**

As members of the world's business and political elites gathered at the Swiss resort of Davos to promote capitalism, thousands of their opponents met at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil to discuss alternatives to the Davos agenda. The World Social Forum gathered grassroots organizations, trade unionists, human rights and land reform activists, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), progressive and radical intellectuals, a handful of leftist politicians, as well as numerous anti-capitalists of different stripes for five days of workshops and roundtable discussions. The theme of the event was "a different world is possible." Apparently, that sort of rhetoric was out of line for the commercial U.S. press who prefer not to deviate from the TINA directive (There Is No Alternative) in their reporting. Thus, we saw little coverage in the U.S. media regarding this event. While there were a number of differences and some tension between anti-capitalist radicals and some of the more reform-minded activists, the overall feeling was there was some genuine debate and discussions going on, especially compared to the stale rhetoric emanating out of Davos. The forum also featured an hour-plus meeting between representatives from Davos and Porto Alegre for a trans-Atlantic debate. It was billed as a "Dialogue between Davos and Porto Alegre." The debate was arranged to explore if there was any common ground between the elites gathered in Davos and the newly launched World Social Forum. Apparently not. One participant, after condemning the arrests of demonstrators at Davos, suggested the best gift the corporate executives at Davos could give the world was "for them to board a spaceship and blast off for outer space" and pointed out that all of us would "be much better off without them." Another participant screamed at financier George Soros, calling him a hypocrite. "How many children's deaths have you been respon-



sible for?" she yelled. Militant actions were also on the agenda. Jose Bove, the French anti-McDonald's activist and the Brazilian MST (Movement of the Landless), occupied a Monsanto field and destroyed a field of genetically modified crops. The forum drew to a close with an "appeal for mobilization" and an exhortation to fight "the hegemony of finance, the destruction of our cultures, the monopolization of knowledge and of the mass communications media, the degradation of nature and the destruction of the quality of life." While protesters in Davos encountered brutality and repression as Swiss authorities attempted to stifle dissent by turning the country into a police fortress, many activists in Porto Alegre got to experience the spirit of possibilities — that a different world is possible.

## **DOWN THE MEMORY HOLE (AGAIN)**

The Racak massacre was cited by the United States as a major reason why it engaged in a bombing campaign against the Serbs in 1999. This massacre was heavily reported by commercial media in great detail. In January of 1999, William Walker, then head of the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), led the press to the Kosovar village of Racak and announced that several dozen Kosovar Albanians had been killed by Serb soldiers. Walker condemned the killings as a "horrendous" massacre and informed the press the dead were all civilians who were brutally mutilated and executed. President Bill Clinton also expressed his indignation saying, "We should remember what happened in the village of Racak...Innocent men, women

and children were taken from their homes to a gully, forced to kneel in the dirt, sprayed with gunfire—not because of anything they had done, but because of who they were." However, troubling evidence emerged that contradicted the official story. Weeks later, a German newspaper reported that several European governments were pressing to fire William Walker based on information from other officials in Kosovo that the Racak bodies were not massacred civilians but were mostly KLA fighters killed in battle. Now a new report from Finnish forensic pathologists who investigated the incident on behalf of the European Union says there is no evidence of a massacre. They report that none of the bodies were mutilated and there was no evidence of torture. Not a single U.S. media outlet ran a story on these startling findings with the exception of a brief United Press International wire story (1/18/01).

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—Bill Moyers

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## Italy's Cultural Underground

# Social Centers

By Adam Bregman

**T**hough it may be hard to imagine in America, in Italy, communists, anarchists, ravers, punks, hackers and artists have seized vast, abandoned factories, forts, boarded-up schools and churches and transformed them into cinemas, concert halls, bars, squats and art galleries. Far from being scabies-infested scum pits with gutter punks spray-painting the names of their favorite bands on the walls, Italy's social centers are among the country's most vital cultural institutions.

Some are draped with spectacular works of art, while others provide shelter and services for new immigrants. For many young people, especially in small and medium-sized towns, social centers provide an ideal hangout, which is the only alternative to expensive, sleazy discos.

The movement began in 1975 when some radical communists snuck into a dilapidated building in a poor neighborhood of Milan, cleaned the place up and issued a manifesto stating what they hoped to accomplish. The neighborhood lacked a preschool, kindergarten, library, vocational school, medical clinic and spaces for organizing meetings and concerts. They invited city officials and the local population to their social center, called Leoncavallo, where they eventually opened a carpentry workshop, a sewing

school, a theater and other facilities. Leoncavallo, Italy's first and most famous social center, has been shut down and forced to move locations several times. Today it is a giant structure covered with magnificent graffiti, containing a concert room, a disco, a skateboard ramp, a documentation center to help immigrants and several bars. The folks who run it are into hip-hop (which is still yet to hit it big in Italy) and Public Enemy chose to play there

**For many young people, especially in small and medium-sized towns, social centers provide an ideal hangout, which is the only alternative to expensive, sleazy discos.**

recently rather than a traditional concert venue.

During the '80s, the social center movement was spurred by punk rock and in the '90s the rave scene was a prominent influence. Currently, Italy has approximately 150 social centers, but there is a basic philosophy that governs almost all of them.

"Social centers are supposed to be open to any form of expression," says Andrea Borgioli, a university student with dyed black hair and shaved eyebrows who

digs Marilyn Manson and Korn and can't find anyone who will rent him an apartment in Bologna because of how he looks. "Like if I wanted to do an exhibition somewhere else, I would need lots of money, but I could go to a social center and they would let me do it for free and anyone can go there and do whatever kind of art they want."

Unlike anything else in Italy, social centers are also supposed to be open all the time to provide a refuge for anyone who needs a place to sleep or just somewhere to go, though often they are closed for security reasons or because no one is around. Distinct from practically any other place one would go to have fun, social centers are non-profit, anticapitalist entities. The social center movement was mostly given form by communists. (Communists in Italy range from your typical jargon-spouting Marxist-Leninists to what most of the world would more accurately call socialists, and from a major political party that still uses the hammer and sickle as its symbol—but more closely resembles the United States' Democratic Party—to young, radical communists who occupy buildings and create social centers.) Their anticapitalist tradition means that most social centers use any profits from events to pay their minimal expenses or to help their comrades who have been ar-



# Italy's Cultural Underground

rested. At most social centers, entry to a concert or rave is \$3, beer or drinks, maybe \$1 and food, probably free. But more recently, a number of social centers, like Link in Bologna, have strayed from these basic ideals.

"Link is not an occupied place," says Lorenzo Costa, a literature student who lives in the hilly countryside just outside of Siena. "They managed to have Link given to them by the mayor. Artistically, it's quite interesting. In all Europe it is known and as far as music and video, it's done very well. But even though they try to remain in contact with the movement, everyone knows it is not a social center." The often ill-spoken-of Link charges a whopping \$8 for concerts and raves.

Social centers are free autonomous zones where the government and police have no jurisdiction and where folks should feel free to in-

dulge in whatever they like, a stark contrast to the hundreds of ridiculous laws that apply to any sort of entertainment-related business in America.

"Inside you can use drugs, but not sell them," says Borgioli, "which is not because of problems with the police or for the safety of the social center, but for social, idealistic reasons, because they don't want someone to get rich selling drugs to everyone and exploiting people. At the same time, they want people to be free to do what they want." This freedom means that at many of the smaller social centers,

almost any band can set up its own gigs. Also, travelers can usually find a free place to crash.

Though sometimes tolerated, social centers are, of course, illegal in Italy and so they are often scattered on the edges of town. In my travels, I spent numerous hours unsuccessfully trying to locate social centers by foot and by car. One evening in Florence, I spent many hours circling around Parco delle Cascine, a huge, scary park populated mostly by Brazilian transvestite hookers. I was searching for

the other side of town to Asilo Occupato, where I was greeted by a mustachioed French guy in a turtleneck and two dopey-looking Mohawked guys (one immediately antagonistic), who told me they didn't, as a policy, speak with journalists. I tried to explain that I was down with their cause, whatever that might be. But the mustachioed fellow told me I could try and come back the next day and there might be someone who lived there who would talk to me, but probably not, and that in general, Turin's squatters would not speak with journalists.

This proved not to be true. In fact, these were the only unfriendly social center folks I met. The next day I hopped on a tram which dropped me off way in the south of the city at the doorstep of Turin's renowned anarchist social center, El Paso, which is



L'Indiano, a social center that is the hub of the local techno/house music scene, but was not able to find it. In Genoa, I walked across half the length of the city, through dark, narrow, snakelike streets which live up to their seedy reputation, only to find that my destination, the social center Zapata, was on top of a mountain and unreachable. On a particularly bad night in Turin, I walked miles to Prinz Eugen (a social center known for publishing some excellent books), where they turned off the light and pretended they weren't there when I knocked. So I decided to walk to

housed in an 18th century villa and has been around for 12 years. A little nervous about knocking on the door, I hung out by the back door next to a 20-foot-tall metal monster made from mufflers and scooter parts. Soon, a girl emerged from the door and invited me inside and a fellow who spoke a little English and had lived there for 12 years gave me a tour. The interior was magnificent. There was a handmade metal fireplace, a concert hall where a bunch of big-name touring acts had played (including their friends Mano Negra, who had drawn a crowd of thousands), a loft



# Italy's Cultural Underground

with a pool table and an infoshop packed with anarchist propaganda, records, videos and porn magazines. Outside, there was a garden with a homemade swing and a front yard piled with salvaged metal, old signs and 50 giant wooden doors. But what really blew me away was the bathroom next to the bar, which was a folk art masterpiece. It had gorgeous iron lamps made from pipes, a stone sink, and a homemade piss trough and it was completely decorated in colorful, intricate, Gaudi-like tiling.

I also visited a couple of small-town social centers. While Milan has approximately 19 active social centers and Rome about 27, you can also find social centers across the whole of Italy in towns such as Verona, Bergamo, Arezzo, Alessandria, Ravenna and Asti. I found one that was recently occupied in Lucca, an attractive Tuscan town situated behind towering medieval walls. Just outside of the walls, is Ex-Safill, which is currently housed in an old aluminum factory and is run by a group of young radicals who have been kicked out of three other locations in several months. Their main activities include conferences on a lot of the usual social center topics (Chiapas, Kurdistan, the Palestinians, the WTO protests in Seattle and of course, Mumia Abu-Jamal) and large-scale dub, breakbeat, funk and house concerts, which have drawn up to 500 people.

Lorenzo Costa spent most of his college years deeply involved with the social center movement in Bologna. Somewhat of an expert on the subject, Costa explained to me how difficult it is for many social centers to survive.

"When we wanted to open a social center, we would look for places that are closed down and often places that were owned by the city. For the first month we'd sleep inside, because you don't know if the police are going to throw you out. Sometimes, you'd get thrown out the next day. One time we occupied this very beau-

tiful place that had been a monastery and a school and had been closed for 12 years. We had a guy who went around to radio stations reading a document explaining why we had occupied the place and inviting people to come down. A few hours later, we had 200 people. This was a real nice period where there was a real movement, but it eventually fell apart because of problems with the police and divisions in the city between various groups."

Borgioli, the Marilyn Manson fan, is up on what's currently happening in Bo-

**Is America tolerant enough to ever let young people have control of public space to do with what they wish? Probably not. But before that ever happens, there will have to be a consensus among young people that they want to have control over their own lives and their own hangouts. And there will have to be an organized movement to achieve those goals.**

logna, one of Italy's communist strongholds. "This year for the first time a guy was elected for mayor who belongs to the center-right party and he immediately closed all the social centers and they stayed shut for months and then one by one they started to reopen. To keep them closed, he would have had to keep the police in front of them every day, which would be impossible."

Compared to how things would go down with the police in any city in the U.S., police in Italy generally show a lot of restraint when it comes to social centers. Other times, they act like the L.A.P.D. on a mildly bad day.

"Sometimes, they just break down the door and smash everything they find inside," says Costa. "They even write fascist slogans on the walls. One time, they went into a computer room and pissed on all the

computers. The things that they don't ruin, they take away. You can ask for them back, but nobody does because they take down your name and then it's sure that you'll be accused of occupying the place."

One of Italy's most important social centers, CPA in Florence, is in imminent danger of being bulldozed for a shopping mall. A former factory which has been squatted for 11 years and which contains a large concert hall, a movie house, a sound stage, a skate park, a gym, a basketball court and a darkroom, CPA will be replaced

by Coop, a large supermarket chain which was started by the former Communist Party. The politically active punks who run CPA (and publish a fine, monthly newspaper, *Comunicazione Antagonista*) plan to fight their eviction, but they are up against powerful, greedy leftists and communists who could care less about a thriving autonomous community which doesn't generate profits for them or anyone else.

However, Italy's social centers, which the French newspaper *Le Monde* called "the Italian cultural jewel," continue to expand. Though many European countries have squatters' movements and some left-leaning governments are tolerant of them, only Germany's squats, which are not nearly as abundant or diverse, in any way compare to the scene in Italy. Of course, in the U.S. there is no such movement to speak of. There have been squatters' movements on the East Coast in New York and Philadelphia, but they have been invariably smashed to pieces by the police. Is America tolerant enough to ever let young people have control of public space to do with what they wish? Probably not. But before that ever happens, there will have to be a consensus among young people that they want to have control over their own lives and their own hangouts. And there will have to be an organized movement to achieve those goals.

Until then, go to Italy and check out some real democracy.



# DARKNESS IN EL DORADO

## Neel, Chagnon and the Yanomami

**M**adam President,... We write to inform you of an impending scandal that will affect the American Anthropological profession... In its scale, ramifications, and sheer criminality and corruption it is unparalleled in the history of Anthropology."

Thus begins a recent e-mail from two distinguished anthropologists, Professors Terry Turner of Cornell and Leslie Sponsel of the University of Hawai'i, to Louise Lamphere, president of the American Anthropological Association. The man primarily accused of these crimes, a geneticist named James Neel, died last February. The charges are made by reporter Patrick Tierney in his book *Darkness in El Dorado*.

Neel worked for a covert program of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) to study the effects of radiation on human subjects and to see how human groups behaved under conditions of extreme stress. Neel had ubermensch notions about the genetics of "leadership" and differential rates of reproduction among dominant and sub-dominant males in a genetically "isolated" human population. The AEC was happy to pick up the tab, no doubt eager to find out how any survivor group of carefully selected Americans secluded in caves during nuclear Armageddon would survive and breed in the after-

math.

"Tierney presents convincing evidence," write the aghast anthropologists Turner and Sponsel that on his 1968 trip to the Yanomami, a tribe in the Venezuelan Amazon, Neel greatly exacerbated, and probably started, the epidemic of measles that killed 'hundreds, perhaps thousands' (Tierney's language-the exact

**On Tierney's account of it, there's nothing here that separates Neel from the Nazi doctors, and ghastly though the whole story is, there's little that should surprise anyone who has looked at the practical functions of anthropology as a handservant of Empire. Anthropologists often served as spies for the colonial authorities, as many native peoples correctly surmised.**

figure will never be known) of Yanomami." It seems that the epidemic was "caused, or at least worsened and more widely spread, by a campaign of vaccination carried out by the research team, which used a virulent vaccine (Edmonson BI) that had been counter-indicated by medical experts for use on isolated populations with no prior exposure to measles (exactly the Yanomami situation)."

Thus, according to Tierney, who spent ten years researching this history, Neel secretly supervised a program of potentially lethal injections. Then he instructed the members of his research team to refuse to provide any medical assistance to the sick and dying Yanomami, Neel said that as men of science they should not intervene. He apparently believed that before the rise

of mass societies, first in agricultural communities and then in cities, small genetically isolated groups would produce leaders with dominant genes who would then appropriate a big share of the available women with whom they would breed, thus constantly upgrading the genetic stock of the tribe.

But his theory faced a big problem, namely the vulnerability of such small groups to diseases and consequent epidemics imported from the outside world, which the large groups in modern mass society could more easily absorb.

Hence Neel's terrible experiments on the Yanomami, in a kind of grim downgrade of the Malthusian ethics of "Survivor." He wanted to disprove the vulnerability of small, isolated groups to epidemics, seeking to show that though a disease such as measles might wreak awful havoc, his alpha-dominated males would be better adapted to evolve genetic immunity to these "contact" diseases. Many might die



but the survivors would be of ever more superior stock.

In their letter to the head of the Anthropological Association Turner and his colleague Sponsel write carefully that "Tierney's well-documented account, in its entirety, strongly supports the conclusion that the epidemic was in all probability deliberately caused as an experiment designed to produce scientific support for Neel's eugenic theory."

Neel also allegedly colluded with Venezuelan politicians attempting to gain control of Yanomami lands for illegal gold mining concessions. He provided "cover" for the illegal mine developer as a "naturalist" collaborating with the anthropological researchers, in exchange for the politician's guarantee of continued access to the Indians for the anthropologists.

It's not surprising that Neel should have approved of the work of Napoleon Chagnon and welcomed him as an associate. For decades, in work such as *The Fierce People*, Chagnon has been promoting a version of Yanomami society in which aggressive alpha males appropriate all desirable women and slaughter the weak, to the great delight of sociobiologists who have revelled in Chagnon's fictions as proof of their own gloomy views of the human condition. The simplest explanation of why the Yanomami were "fierce" is because they quite rightly couldn't stand Chagnon.

Tierney devotes much of the book to a critique of Napoleon Chagnon's work, charging that Chagnon has cooked his research, not least by repeatedly fomenting the internecine wars which he invokes as evidence of the ultimately healthful genetic purging by which the Yanomami survive.

On Tierney's account of it, there's nothing here that separates Neel from the Nazi doctors, and ghastly though the whole story is, there's little that should surprise anyone who has looked at the practical functions of anthropology as a hand servant of Empire. Anthropologists often served as spies for the colonial authorities, as many native peoples correctly surmised.

E. Evans-Pritchard, whose study of the

African Nuer tribe is regarded as a classic of social anthropology, interrupted a lyrical account of Nuer life to note without comment or reproof the punitive raids of British colonial authorities "including bombing and machine-gunning of camps". Nor did he regard this rending of Nuer society by the British as a topic worthy of inclusion in his description of stresses in Nuer society.

Will Tierney's book provoke the uproar that Turner and Sponsel predict? Will anthropology be placed in the dock? We doubt it. For years native groups across

the world with stories of the depredations of anthropologists have been eager to tell them to anyone interested. Few have listened. The can of worms is way too big.

— Alexander Cockburn & Jeffrey St. Clair

"Darkness in El Dorado—Neel, Shagnon and the Yanomami" first appeared in the Oct 1-15, 2000 issue of *CounterPunch* available from 3220 N. Street, NW, Suite 346, Washington, DC 20007 ([www.counterpunch.org](http://www.counterpunch.org)). Subscriptions are \$40/year (22-issues)





# BURSTING BUBBLES

**Doug Henwood says mean things about the new economy**

**A**UTHOR DOUG HENWOOD is something of a cult figure among left-wing brainiacs. A former part-time merchant marine and toll collector on the New Jersey Turnpike, Henwood was the first in his family to go to college. From there he made it to graduate school for literature, dropped out, and almost began a career on Wall Street ... but something went wrong, terribly wrong. Today Henwood is America's leading radical economic journalist. His merciless wit, fluid writing style, and uncompromising analysis have made his newsletter, *Left Business Observer*, the intellectual equivalent of uncut dope, subscribed to religiously by everyone from death row inmates to Canadian finance ministers. Henwood's last book, *Wall Street: How It Works and for Whom* (Verso, 1997), is an irreverent tour de force that demystifies the workings of high finance. Another book, on the so-called new economy, is on the way. I interviewed Henwood at his Spartan office in Manhattan, which overlooks one of the last sweatshops in the garment district. Henwood calls it "a very 'old economy' view."

**Christian Parenti: What do you think of the much used term "globalization"?**

Doug Henwood: I think it's very imprecise and used to mean many things. On the left, "globalization" is used instead of "capitalism," or "imperialism," or some combination of the two. In some ways this is an uncritical embrace of vocabulary that comes out of the ruling class. Look at the World Bank or mainstream pundits: they all talk about the "inevitability of globalization." Many on the left just take that term—whatever exactly it means—and put negative signs in front of it. They don't really sort through what the term itself means or what

the critical approach of an oppositional movement should be.

Also, I think "globalization" presumes a past, innocent, "localized" age when things were nicer. And it identifies the process of internationalization itself as the enemy rather than the capitalistic, imperialistic, exploitative aspects of that internationalization.

Internationalism is something progressives should embrace. I thought we liked cosmopolitanism and intercourse of all kinds among the people of the world.

**So why the use of this term, "globalization"?**

People are very timid about using words like "capitalism" and "imperialism." We're told they're very out of fashion now. But I don't think a mushy and misleading substitute terminology is acceptable. People should call things by their names and start thinking of things by their names. Luckily, I see more of a willingness on the part of troublemakers to do just that.

Once you start to understand capitalism, you see that it's always been an international and internationalizing system. Maybe we can say the pace of that has picked up, but I don't think there is anything particularly new about the political economy today.

For example, levels of capital flows and international trade in the late 19th century were by some measures higher than they are today. A hundred years ago you had the age of outright imperialism, which was certainly a sort of globalization. This has always been a global system, a world system. To posit this utopia when everything was really groovy and "local" is misleading, historically and politically.

*Some would concede your point but argue that the sheer quantity of international transactions and communication has led to a qualitative shift.*

Certainly things have speeded up. But the shift from a world in which information and capital could only flow at the speed of weeks—transatlantic ocean voyages, for example—to the era of the telegraph was a much bigger shift than anything we've seen today. That change compressed the whole world timescale from weeks into seconds. Going from seconds to nanoseconds is faster, but is it really more radical or important than changes in the past?

We're used to thinking in a global way because of the telegraph. We inherited a whole way of global thinking that was created ex nihilo then. The same with the telephone, the photograph, jet travel—these all had to do with creating a proverbial "global village." We're not entering some new kind of hyperspace severed from what went before it.

And although the international movement of capital and goods may take different technical forms today, the basic social relations of the world economy are still very much the same. There are still owners who employ, control, and profit from workers. There are still imperial centers dictating policy to and demanding service from the colonized periphery. There's still the debtor-creditor relation, which is one of dominance and submission.

**Where does wealth come from in capitalism?**

I'm very old-fashioned. I think that wealth—whatever kinds of transformations it goes through—fundamentally originates in the exploitation of labor and nature in the pro-



duction process. So workers produce wealth that's then expropriated—taken—by the owners of capital. It may not be expropriated directly by capitalists the way it was in the 19th century—often you can't point to a single plant owner and say, "I work for him, and my work makes him rich"—but it's still the same set of social relations.

It's a lot more institutionally complicated now; wealth goes through all these financial markets, all these transformations from commodities to money to stocks back to money and commodities and so on. Those who produce wealth, say, in a sweatshop making clothes for the Gap, are geographically distant from those who control and accumulate wealth via stocks, bonds, their trust funds, whatever. But still, fundamentally, workers produce wealth; capitalists and financiers expropriate it.

*You're finishing another book, called New Economy. Could you tell us about that?*

The whole "new economy" discourse of the last three or four years—which may be fading now that the dot-com stocks have collapsed and the economy is looking a little recessionish—holds that computer and communications technology have so turned the world upside down that all the old rules don't apply.

Supposedly, we've entered a period of "prosperity for all" because governments are now powerless; finance has been "democratized"; a wonderful "spontaneity" has moved to center stage; there's been an end to the business cycle. Supposedly, we've entered a period of tremendous productivity growth, and there's never been anything like it before.

In fact, there's been a lot of things like it. And the current rhetoric is very similar to past rhetoric that's come late in long bull markets. There's something about an exuberant stock market that leads to this euphoria about "new eras."

The past has seen at least three such periods over the last century. Around 1900-1901, there was a bubble craze jacked up with all the turn-of-the-century fever: a sort of calendar superstition mixed with

technophilic exuberance. Likewise in the late 1920s just before the bust and then in the late 1960s, there was more "new era" hype. At least the current mania is beginning to wane as the markets sink and the dot-com roadkill mounts.

The popular writing of all these periods is always remarkably similar. It's this "technologically driven transformation of life that renders everything else obsolete." There are always claims of a new era of understanding among the peoples of the world because of new technologies. Peace, love, understanding, and commerce.

In the 1960s the chair of the Federal Reserve, Willie McChesney Martin, viewed the new-era rhetoric as something to worry about, as a dangerous signal that people were too exuberant. It was too much

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like 1929. That's a very antispeculative, old-fashioned central banker kind of temperament. These days, Alan Greenspan is the leading proponent of the new economy thesis; he promotes it at every opportunity he can get. So the exuberance has filtered to much higher levels of the ruling class than in the past.

*Given this culture's hallucinatory fixation on finance and speculation, it is worth asking a very basic question: what fueled the latest stock market boom?*

I would say this bull market has had several stages. It started in August 1982, with fairly little interruption since. There was the '87 crash, but that didn't last all that long, and by formal standards the recession that followed wasn't too serious. So the bull

market began just as the great Volcker squeeze was ending. Paul Volcker took over at the Federal Reserve in 1979, and he almost immediately drove interest rates from around 7 percent to over 18 to 20 percent, which created a very deep recession. The official reason for this was to end inflation and rising wages.

Recession cured other problems as well. The commodity-producing countries were forming cartels and driving prices higher. General rebellion was going on in the southern part of the world. The United States had lost the Vietnam War. There was a lot of talk of loss of imperial power. At home in the United States there were a lot of wildcat strikes. It was a time of the "blue collar blues," when it looked like the working class was saying "fuck you" to work,

"fuck you" to the boss. That sort of attitude was reproduced around the world. There were strikes in Italy. A lot of worker protest and militant action going on in Europe.

There was a famous report of inflation put out by the [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] some time in the late '60s or early '70s that described economic inflation as inseparable from the fact that there were so many people in the streets.

*In other words, there was inflation not just of currency but of expectations.*

Exactly! And that's what Volcker dealt with at around the same time Thatcher took office and did the same in England. He tripled U.S. interest rates and created a very deep recession. Then Reagan came into office, breaking unions and promising to rebuild the imperial military machine. He launched a mass assault on the welfare state. Discipline was reasserted: unions were broken and there was a general reassertion of capitalist power over labor on a national and a global scale. This assertion of ruling-class power, I would say, was very successful.

The recession in the early '80s scared the hell out of the working class in the United States and around the world. The



## Bursting Bubbles

tougher attitude on the part of the Reagan administration—the invasion of Grenada being one example—really took the starch out of the third world's progressive talk about a "new economic order." It was clear the United States was going into a big military buildup and would be much more assertive militarily and politically.

All these things took hold in the early '80s. That had the effect of ending the long slide in the U.S. profit rate which started in the early '70s. The profit rate started rising. There was a massive upward redistribution of income because of that higher profit rate, because of the tax and regulatory changes here and elsewhere. From the point of view of the stockholding class, these were getting to be wonderful times.

So the bull market at first was a very rational reaction to all this: profits were rising, so the market would rise. It was becoming a very good time to be an owner of capital. That set of circumstances prevailed throughout the 1980s.

*To use the mainstream language, stock values rose because stock earnings rose, thus the stock market of the 1980s was rational?*

Yeah. Then you had that period, around '89 to '93, the George Herbert Walker Bush years, when the economy was pretty flat and the financial markets were sort of troubled. You had the Gulf War in there. But then after that was over, the whole thing resumed again. And then when Clinton came to power, aside from him raising taxes on the top percent of the population, which is one of the few good things he did, it was clear then that there was no political challenge at all to the rule of capital. Whatever troublemaking or social democratic tendencies that remained in the Democratic Party had been pretty much defeated and purged, thanks in no small part to Clinton, one of the founders of the Democratic Leadership Council.

There was the end of any threat of a national health insurance program after Clinton's disaster. And financial orthodoxy completely took over the Democratic Party, so there was no institutionalized way of resisting the agenda of the bull market and

the free traders. Wall Street and the stockholding classes were very happy about that, so they continued to buy stocks.

But sometime around 1995 or so, things stopped being quite so rational and started getting irrationally exuberant. The public began investing in a big way. The upturn in profits slowed down—profitability numbers actually peaked in '96, and they've been going down a little bit since then.

So the last four or five years have been mainly just the bull market feeding off itself in classic bubble fashion. The market goes up because the market goes up, and people have just been getting more

**The development of this anti-World Trade Organization, anti-World Bank movement—regardless of my reservations about the standard analysis among many of the movement's putative "leaders"—is just wonderful to see. And I find that in talking to people who are involved in protest, they're really open to all kinds of truly radical ideas.**

and more exuberant and more and more bubblish.

*What about the role of so-called flight capital coming from abroad in fueling the U.S. stock market?*

It's certainly had an impact. The Asian economic crisis had a significant economic role in that a lot of the capital that had been heading toward Asia pulled out and headed toward the United States. The Mexican crisis of '94 had a similar effect. A lot of money exited Latin America and came to the U.S. The stagnation in Japan and western Europe has also contributed to the flow of money here and thus overvaluation in the markets.

This tremendous inflow of foreign capital—two or three hundred billion dollars a year for the last several years—has helped propel our expanding economy. That's kept markets rising; it has kept consumers be-

ing able to spend beyond their means.

And at a political, rather than a financial, level I think the effects of the collapse of the Eastern bloc have certainly contributed to the confidence of the capitalist class. There's no significant challenge to their rule now. Whatever the faults of the Soviet Union, at least it was an embodiment of the idea that you could do things differently. The loss of that alternative model is very cheering to capitalists around the world, who use that collapse to discredit any kind of state regulation of the economy or any remotely redistributive policies. So it's been a great ideological boost, and certainly Russian flight capital has injected a lot of cash. A lot of cash poured out of Asia, Latin America, eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union into the United States' stock markets. All these calamities elsewhere have produced wonderful results for the American ruling class.

*Any last comments?*

I guess one of the more depressing aspects of political life in the last 20 years has been this absolute sense of resignation on the part of so much of the left. But it seems to me in the last couple of years that defeatism is being reversed. There seems to be a growing confidence. The development of this anti-World Trade Organization, anti-World Bank movement—regardless of my reservations about the standard analysis among many of the movement's putative "leaders"—is just wonderful to see. And I find that in talking to people who are involved in protest, they're really open to all kinds of truly radical ideas. So I think maybe this very long period of reaction that we've been living through for the last several decades may be finally coming to an end. While I'm sort of a temperamental pessimist, I've certainly not felt so optimistic about politics in a long, long time. — **Christian Parenti**

"Bursting Bubbles" appeared in a January 2001 issue of the weekly San Francisco Bay Guardian newspaper ([www.sfbg.com](http://www.sfbg.com)).



# Top 12 Most Luddite Films of All Time

What is the most luddite film of all time? The top 12? Maybe these questions have never come up, but here are the answers anyway. The most luddite film of all time is Godard's *Alphaville* (1965), the only film in which the central character actually says, "Technology, hah! Keep it!" *Alphaville* also features the most luddite character name of all time: Lemmy Caution, a comic-bookish detective played by the durable, somewhat eroded Eddie Constantine. And the top twelve films? They are:

1. *Alphaville* (Godard, 1965)
2. *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1926)
3. Tie: *A Nous La Liberte* (Rene Clair, 1931) and *Modern Times* (Charlie Chaplin, 1936)
4. Tie: *Frankenstein* (James Whale, 1931) and *Young Frankenstein*
5. *Fahrenheit 451* (Francois Truffaut, 1965)
6. *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982)
7. *Terminator* (James Cameron, 1984)
8. *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (Jamie Uys, 1984)
9. *Brazil* (Terry Gilliam, 1985)
10. *Robocop* (Paul Verhoeven, 1987)
11. *They Live* (John Carpenter, 1988)
12. *Gattaca* (Andrew M. Niccol, 1997)

Why 12 and not 10? Well, our favorites couldn't all fit in 10. In fact, we left one very important film out, so here's an additional category:

Missed congeniality: *Jonah Who Will Be 25 In The Year 2000* (Alaine Tanner, 1976) That's fifteen, if you are counting.

Some of these have been sequelled, of varying degrees of quality (*Terminator*, *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, and *Robocop*, and

the champion property of all time: *Frankenstein*, produced in 80+ varieties, including *Frankenpooh* and *Frankenweenie*, a Disney dog) and knocked off by cheap imitations. Another *Terminator* is assuredly in the works and a Mel Gibson remake of *Fahrenheit 451* has long been rumored, but the rest of the list is fairly safe from remake, or is it? Imagine Bruce Willis as Lemmy Caution in *Alphaville2: Die Hard Disk*; a Tim Burton / Madonna *Metropolis*; or Jim Carrey in *Modern Times*. Worse things have happened to better people.

But why these fifteen twelve great films? Here's why:

## #1 *Alphaville* (Godard, 1965)

The only luddish film in which the protagonist actually says, "Technology, hah! — keep it!" Lemmy Caution (Eddie Constantine) establishes the archetype of the Luddite detective (spy/assassin; agent 003) in this wordy classic that critic Carlos Clarens called "Science Poetry." In another galaxy (a Ford Galaxy, if you must know) Caution enters *Alphaville*, a technocracy ruled by the Alpha-60 computer, to retrieve or kill its creator, a Dr. Nosferatu (formerly Dr. von Braun). Clarens



described the Alpha-60 this way: "a giant electronic computer that processes, classifies, and programs the life data of its residents. This control has brought about a cult of absolute logical behavior and those

who do not conform to it (i.e., those who show some emotion) are ruthlessly destroyed by execution during staged acquacades, or by submitting to the persuasion to commit suicide. To abet this law and order of the machine, words are kept in place by changing meaning, some being suppressed altogether while new editions of the bible/dictionary are issued daily." Caution kills Nosferatu, causes Alpha-60 to autodestruct by feeding it poetry, and rescues Nosferatu's daughter (Mrs. Godard). It's a film both pretentious and funny, more amusing to talk about afterward than it is to watch.

## #2 *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1926)



The film that established the beauty of robots as well as the question of who can remain (and know they are assuredly) "real" in a culture which is replacing humans with machines. It's all here: dehumanization of work; polarization of society; unionism; marianism; robotics; and art direction that has influenced science fiction films ever since.

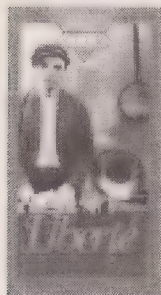
## #3 Tie: *A Nous La Liberte* (Rene Clair, 1931) and *Modern Times* (Charlie Chaplin, 1936)

Two benchmark films about working in factories. *A Nous* is the original, depicting the boss as a thief (literally), fascist factories, and the prison-like tyranny of factory worklife. Chaplin lifted this concept for the



## Luddite Films

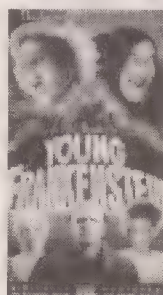
most memorable bits in his last tramp film, *Modern Times*, which played on the haplessness of the factory worker as demon-



strated by the Tramp. Chaplin comments on the Taylorism movement for worker efficiency in both the speedy assembly line scene and the automatic worker feeding machine scene. Of the two films, *Modern Times* has become more emblematic, perhaps because stills of Charlie caught in the gears of a giant machine have become one of luddism's most widely seen icons.

#### #4 Tie: *Frankenstein* (James Whale, 1931) and *Young Frankenstein*

The original *Frankenstein* has become a genre unto itself. "It's alive!" It is the Ur-film [after *Metropolis*] of modern mad science. It remains the prime example of the message that things you make may turn on you. It is also, with *Metropolis*, one of a only a few examples of the expressionist theatrical style on film. No other film has

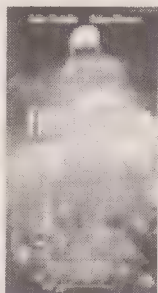


ever spawned as many derivative descendants, including such screen gems as "Jesse James Meets Frankenstein's Daughter" (1966). Mel Brook's *Young Frankenstein* used the original props and has one genuinely remarkable scene which pokes

fun at the marketing of the acceptability of science and technology: Dr. Victor Frankenstein puts on a show with his monster and they sing and dance a duet of "Putting On The Ritz." The townspeople are not fooled. What monsters are we creating?

#### #5 *Fahrenheit 451* (Francois Truffaut, 1965)

In the future, most people live in fireproof houses and the job of firemen is to burn books for the state, to protect the populace from ideas that might make them unhappy. *Fahrenheit 451* is Ray Bradbury's



parable of how technology destroys heritage and self-knowledge, and how television anesthetizes the populace. The underlying message of this film is that you don't have to physically burn books (the title refers to the temperature at which paper burns) to "burn" books. It is also the canonical film about censorship. The book is probably the most widely assigned luddite text in US high schools. This is probably the most likely luddite film to be remade, although it will be difficult to find someone who does angst better than the late Oskar Werner.

#### #6 *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982)

If we can make real-looking androids, how can we be sure who is real, or even if we ourselves are real? And if we can create an android (replicants, they are called here) that looks like Daryl Hannah, why can't we make future Los Angeles look like someplace you might want to live? Most importantly: if we create a near-human consciousness, what rights do we endow it with? This film is Phillip K. Dick (from his novel "Do Androids Dream of Electronic Sheep") made technoir through the Hollywood blender. Im-



portant as much for its art direction as for its message.

#### #7 *Terminator* (James Cameron, 1984)

As if you didn't have enough to worry about... The evil future is sending cyborgs back to crush the prenatal spark of humanity [by killing the not-yet-pregnant mother-to-be of a hero of the future (the leader of the rebel forces, no less) who hasn't been born yet - got that?]. Arnold Schwarzenegger gives the performance he was born to play: a cyborg who says, flatly, "I'll be Baaaaack!" And keeps his promise. Message: in the future, when machines get the upper hand, we become the cockroaches.



Message: in the future, when machines get the upper hand, we become the cockroaches.

#### #8 *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (Jamie Uys, 1984)

Our trash is still pretty advanced technology in much of the world. This film is the apotheosis of the returnable bottle. A noble savage encounters less than noble civilized folks on his way to the edge of the earth to dispose of some disruptive technology, a soda



bottle thrown out of an airplane and into the desert habitat of his tribe. The message? Don't assume that our technology is good for everybody. Currently inexcusably out of print.

#### #9 *Brazil* (Terry Gilliam, 1985)

In the future, the machine that will be most dangerous will continue to be the bureaucracy. In a bureaucracy no one admits to hearing you scream. *Brazil* presents a





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bleak dystopian future where a literal (smashed) bug causes the film's hero big trouble. Robert DeNiro plays the kind of handyman that we are all going to need in the future.

## #10 Robocop (Paul Verhoeven, 1987)

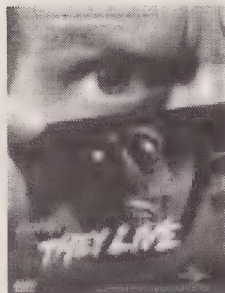


Luddite paranoia on film: the threat of high-tech outsourcing. You say your job is killing you? This is worse. Your job has killed you, and you come back as a cyborg owned by the evil outsourcing company that made your job hell in the first place, and you

are tormented by UHF reception problems in your memories of your former family. A really well done satire of cold-blooded corporate R&D run amok, comic book heros, and action films.

## #11 They Live (John Carpenter, 1988)

Ever get that feeling, at about 10 in the morning, that maybe the world is run by a bunch of ugly aliens in some kind of Amway scheme, and that they are keeping you compliant with subliminal messages everywhere such as "consume," "Don't question authority," and "sleep," that you could see if



only you had these special sunglasses? Beyond luddite paranoia and into the bounds of schizophrenia, this is the primo educational film about subliminal messaging and may even be Noam

Chomsky's favorite science fiction film.

## #12 Gattaca (Andrew M. Niccol, 1997)

The database as enemy. If your company has a DNA code instead of a dress code, "casual friday" can be murder. Great technoir film about the future uses of genotyping. In the future, faking your resume to get a great job may include faking your DNA. Interesting and gross title sequence (once you understand what you are seeing). Gore Vidal as the hero's boss (!) "Jerome," the hero, wants to fly in



space, with the Gattaca Corporation. But he is naturally conceived and born, not genetically engineered to be perfect, as Gattaca requires all employees to be. So he

can clean the toilets with Ernest Borgnine (Marty!) or find some way to fake his way in. A murder investigation complicates it all. Set in Frank Lloyd Wright's last design, completed posthumously, the Marin Civic Center. Medical histories and treatment databases already limit employment for many (cancer survivors particularly). This film provides an extreme example of how the uses of such knowledge might become, ab ovo, even more controlling in the future.

More: And now, our missed congeniality selection: Jonah Who Will Be 25 In The Year 2000 (Alaine Tanner, 1976) This is the best film ever made about people resisting development (and about the failure of resistance). Luddism is really not about machines, it is about considering humanity and community before technology and development, without measure against the holy standards of profit and efficiency and markets. This film is about a group of people who gather on a farm and resist local developers. It has one scene that is unique in the history of film and that will never be equaled in Hollywood: the characters gather around a dinner table and sing a song to the unborn child Jonah, in the hope of his future. Since this film has been made their hopes seem to have been misplaced, and at least one reviewer has speculated that Jonah has become an MBA. — *The Luddite Reader*

## There are informative websites for several of the top 12 Luddite films:

## Alphaville

<http://members.aol.com/Clypark/alpha.html>

## Modern Times

<http://wso.williams.edu/~dgerstei/chaplin/machines.html>

## Frankenstein

<http://us.imdb.com/M/title-substring?frankenstein>

## Fahrenheit 451

[www.destgulch.com/movies/f451/](http://www.destgulch.com/movies/f451/)

## Blade Runner

[www.tyrell-corporation.pp.se/](http://www.tyrell-corporation.pp.se/)

## Terminator

[www.movieprop.com/tvandmovie/terminator/](http://www.movieprop.com/tvandmovie/terminator/)

## Gods Must Be Crazy

[www.teachwithmovies.org/guides/gods-must-be-crazy-II.html](http://www.teachwithmovies.org/guides/gods-must-be-crazy-II.html)

## Brazil

[www.trond.com/brazil/](http://www.trond.com/brazil/)

## Robocop

[www.robocop-pd.ca/](http://www.robocop-pd.ca/)

## They Live

[www.toptown.com/dorms/creedstonegate/they/they.htm](http://www.toptown.com/dorms/creedstonegate/they/they.htm)

## Gattaca

[www.sciflicks.com/gattaca/](http://www.sciflicks.com/gattaca/)

**The Luddite Reader** tracks luddite films, books, and music, along with news and luddish content links, at its luddsite: **[www.ludditereader.com](http://www.ludditereader.com)**. Updated twice monthly, The Luddite Reader regularly features a book, film, musical selection, and a recommended link for luddish interests. The Luddite Reader is the website for the technology dysphoric, phobic, paranoid, and the merely cranky. It features selected books, films, music, and other resources for folks who would like to turn their backs on technology, if only they could be sure that it would not sneak up on them so.







# THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS LIFE

By Patrick Marley

Peeking over his shoulder, Bree scans the parking lot. He shines his Mag Lite into the Dumpster and sifts through the inflated sacks of trash, slitting each one open with a knife. As Lars rounds the corner of the Pay Less grocery store, he calls out to Bree and tells him someone just gave him a \$5 bill. Moving to the other side of the Dumpster, Lars reaches his lanky arm deep into the bin as Bree guides him with the flashlight. He retrieves three-fourths of a bag of walnuts, six Chips Ahoy cookies and two stale bagels—if not dinner, at least enough to tide them over for a while. When he finds an empty container of Wet Wipes, Bree warns him to stop, but he continues digging until he fingers soiled diapers.

Rummaging through garbage is not a cruel occupation forced on these itinerants, but rather a part of their chosen lifestyle. Bree, Lars and their fellow travelers opt to avoid the 40-hour work week and a steady flow of bills. Instead of shopping for groceries, paying rent and commuting by car, they Dumpster dive for food and supplies, camp under bridges and sneak aboard freight trains.

"I don't consider myself living off the system," Bree says. "I live off the excess fat of the system that nobody wants."

Though the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and railroad police say that freight hopping is a dying phenomenon practiced only by old hobos and illegal immigrants, the transient lifestyle adopted by Bree and Lars suggests that a new disaffected generation is finding a home along the railroads. Train hopping must be stamped out because it endangers lives and threatens property, authorities say, but they know little about the character of the young people riding

today.

Jumping trains is just one aspect of their way of life, though, and at the moment, Bree and Lars are more interested in finding a heartier supper and something to drink. They slink behind Pay Less, eager for the wealth of food that grocery store trash usually yields, but the store's accessible trash compactor dashes their plans. They drift over to the Dumpster behind a Papa John's in a nearby strip mall, but a lingering employee prevents them from further investigation. KFC's bins are empty, so they retreat to the Pay Less.

Bree checks beverage prices while Lars stations himself outside the exit.

"Good evening, sir," Lars says. "Can you spare any change for a couple of travelers? I'm from Florida and my partner's up from Texas. We're on our way to Ohio."

His black hooded sweatshirt and navy pants conceal weeks of grime. A black baseball cap offsets his blue eyes, translucent marbles that betray his Danish heritage. The 32-year-old keeps his 6-foot frame from being imposing by maintaining a relaxed posture. To lessen the chance that someone will seek out a manager, he only asks customers as they exit the store. Despite his easy demeanor, half the people pretend not to hear him. A few mutter "sorry" as they walk past, and one man glares at him, chastising him with an emphatic "no!" The rest dip into their pockets and hand over quarters, dimes and nickels. Working class people give the most generously, perhaps because they can relate to tight finances—as Jack London noted in *The Road*, his autobiographical account of his hoboing days, "The very poor constitute the last sure recourse of the hungry tramp."



Bree returns and perches on a nearby railing. With a short but unruly beard and a nose ring that hangs down to his lip, he strikes a less anonymous pose than Lars. His plastic-frame glasses held together with electrical tape are famous enough among his friends that he includes a crude rendering of them in the tags he leaves on boxcars and bathroom walls. For a 21-year-old, his hair is prematurely thin, but that detail is obscured by the quasihawk he gave himself while in jail in Havre, Mont. Like most travelers he wears a baseball cap; his is decorated with a Norfolk Southern button and Santa Fe patch. Adding the handful of change to the \$3 from the night before and the \$5 from earlier in the evening, Lars counts out \$11.67. After buying a box of wine for \$7.99, they situate themselves in a stand of trees behind the strip mall. Bree drags crates from behind the mall to sit on while Lars rolls a twofer. They share cigarettes these days because the sack of American Spirit that someone gave them is much stronger than their usual brands. Lars pulls the foil pouch of wine—the “space bag”—from the box, holds it above his head and drinks from the spout, then offers it to Bree.

After several passes of wine and a few more cigarettes, they return to the overflowing Dumpster behind Papa John's. Digging through a pile of boxes, Bree finds two complete pepperoni pizzas and hurls them to Lars. He adds half of a sausage pizza to the pile while Lars plucks a newspaper from the trash, flips through the pages determinedly and tears out the crossword puzzle. Before departing, they watch a maggot inch along a wad of uncooked dough. In a deserted corner of the parking lot, Bree peels back the cheese and removes the pepperoni from the pizza. He has been a vegetarian for nearly half his life, ever since his parents divorced and his mom stopped cooking meat. Lars shoves slices into his mouth as he ponders the crossword, calling out six-letter clues.

After more wine, they decide to seek out a bar or a place to sleep. Across the tracks and a few blocks later, they pass a small house set back on its lot, surrounded by shrubbery. A “for sale” sign stands in the lawn.

“Is that an empty?” Lars asks.

They sprint to the side of the house and peer in the windows. They pop out screens and push on windows until they locate an unlocked one, then somersault inside. Removing his shoes, Lars turns the bathtub on full blast and dips his feet into the yellow water. As the house fills with a sulfur stench from the unused pipes, Bree looks in the empty fridge and tries to light the disconnected stove. They check the upstairs and the closets, but find the house barren. Because they usually wake around 2 p.m., they decide that staying here is too risky. They unlock all the windows in case they change their minds and creep out the back door.

Lars considers himself an urban camper, and when the opportunity of an empty house comes along, he takes advantage of it, just as he takes advantage of the empty space on a train heading in his direction or the uneaten food in a Dumpster. Because of the waste inherent in capitalism, he subscribes to the tenets of anarchism—the belief that oppression stems from government and multinational corporations and that people would be better off without them.

Though he has found a way to subsist outside society, Lars hesitates to call his life the embodiment of a philosophy.

“It’s not a glorious thing,” he says. “It’s just a different way of living. It’s only making do.”

Out of pride, Lars has refused to accept general assistance welfare, but he is embarrassed to tell other train hoppers he has not cashed in on such an easy way to collect money. Sometimes he considers his life and philosophy inconsistent—he has rejected a society he deems corrupt, yet he relies on that society’s waste to get by—at other times, he sees no hypocrisy in that.

“I want to overthrow the government like any good little anarchist,” Lars half-jokes. “[But] what’s wrong with a group not overthrowing the system but living off it like a leech? ... Who is the judge at the end of the day? Who’s the parasite? ... ADM—they live off the system. The biotechnology companies—they make huge profits off government research. That’s using the taxpayer system to buy yourself a limousine.”

Anarchist beliefs are common among young rail riders, but the FRA and railroad police are unaware of such train hoppers. Based on what they see day to day, veteran rail workers and police say the transient population is decreasing. Instead of scouring trains for a handful of petty criminals, they try to root out more serious problems, such as the crime rings that steal cargo from stopped trains in urban areas. While the authorities believe the train-hopping problem is not pervasive, they consider it the most dangerous crime that can happen on railroads. When riders jump a moving train and miss, they can easily wind up under it. If a sitting train suddenly moves while people cross over the couplings between the cars, it can cut off their feet. When switchmen send single cars down the tracks, the nearly silent behemoths roll over anything or anyone in their paths. On its descent, an airplane appears to move slowly, even though it is actually traveling at 250 mph. The speed of a train is similarly hard to gauge, something that Bob Meyer, an FRA assistant to the highway grade manager, considers particularly deadly.

“Once an engineer sees you do something that he deems critical, he can’t stop,” Meyer says. “He’s got 100,000 tons behind him and needs a mile and a half to stop. It’s too late.”

Trespassing is the leading cause of death and injury on railroad property, but not only transients perpetrate this crime. Gary Horton, a sergeant with the Erie County (N.Y.) Police who serves as a go-between for the FRA and police departments, says efforts to stop intruders focus on recreational trespassers—people who enter yards to jog, hunt or take shortcuts. “In my personal opinion, trespassing by transients and hobos is a problem,” Horton says. “Is it as big a problem as John Q. Public? Probably not.”

According to figures kept by the FRA, an average of 426 trespassers died per year from 1975 to 1989. In the 1990s, the yearly average jumped to 520. Fatalities since 1975 have not maintained a particular pattern—they rise one year, then plunge the next—but increased rail traffic probably accounts for the spike in deaths. According to the Association of American Railroads, freight traffic is up 35 percent since 1990. These fatality statistics make no distinction between transients and recreational trespassers, says Marmie Edwards, vice president of communications for the non-profit Operation Lifesaver. Determining what happened in the aftermath of a train crash is difficult because of how long trains take to stop. Bodies are found up to half a mile from where they were struck, so investigators rarely know if the victim was crossing the track or fell off the train.



"Sometimes they can't determine if it was a person or an animal," she says. "Part of the reason the focus is on recreational trespassers is because those are the people who are easier to get the information to."

To reach the transient population, Operation Lifesaver and the FRA distribute folders with information about the dangers of train hopping to the railroad police. Officers can put the tickets they issue to trespassers inside these folders. Operation Lifesaver also gives presentations at homeless shelters, but these programs are centered on the usual assumptions about hobos.

Like many railroad police officers, Lt. Bob Borries of Burlington Northern Santa Fe believes only older hobos and illegal immigrants live a transient lifestyle.

"It's pretty much dying out," Borries says. "There's no evidence of kids doing it as a lifestyle. It's more of a one-time deal. I don't think they do it once and get hooked on it. Those days are gone."

Bree, Lars and other young transients confirm that "dirty kids," as they call themselves, are a minority on the rails. They say they see few people on the lines, and when they do they tend to be older riders or Mexican migrant workers. Regardless, they are friends with dozens—if not hundreds—of riders like themselves.

Duffy Littlejohn, author of *Hopping Freight Trains in America*, notes that estimating the number of people riding trains is nearly impossible. On a given day, he thinks 2,000-4,000 kids, or about 25 percent of the train-hopping population, are on the tracks. Most punks figure they make up a larger percentage.

"I can only extrapolate on what I see," Littlejohn says. "The numbers are extremely imprecise. ... What we do is hidden. It's hard to tell who we are and how many we are."

Punks have been riding trains for at least 10 years, but whether their numbers are increasing or decreasing is impossible to determine. When Norman began hopping trains in 1989, he picked up on it the same way kids do today—by hearing about it through friends. Retired from the rails for six years, he now spends half the year in Minneapolis and half the year in New Orleans. He says many of his friends have likewise settled; the ones who still travel tend to do so now by van or car, but a few still hop trains. After four or five years, the initial rush started to fade.

"You can only do the same route so many times," he says. "There are definite circuits. When you first do it, you think—hey, this is a way of life. But when you're 17 or 21, you're different from when you're older. ... As you get older, it's a lot harder on you."

Train hopping soars during economic crises and social upheavals. Hoboing first grew popular at the close of the Civil War, as trains became more commonplace and a generation of young

men finished a war that had kept them rootless. The hobo ranks again swelled during the Panic of 1873 and the Great Depression. Today's dearth of riders is probably tied to the prosperous economy, but anarchists are not interested in the so-called new economy because it does not guarantee bounty for everyone.

With her middle class background and recent high school diploma, Izzy could participate in the booming economy, but she sees turning her back on it as an ethical imperative. The lanky 18-year-old began squatting in Washington, D.C. two years ago, while she finished high school. She wanted to drop out, but a fellow squatter told her if she graduated she would take her train hopping, which Izzy eagerly wanted to try.

Sitting on a bench near downtown Minneapolis, Izzy watches a police car prowl down a wide sidewalk that cuts through the park. The officers glower at the clusters of vagrants scattered throughout the grassy square block, but they overlook Izzy. The black headband that keeps her braids out of her face reveals her partially shaved head, but her dark clothes look clean, setting her apart from the other homeless people.

Izzy's familiarity with the geography of the city is poor because when she lived here before, she spent most of her time at the Free State, a development site occupied by protestors to prevent the reroute of Highway 55 through sacred Indian land. She does not always squat with such clear political goals in mind, but if she can stay somewhere for free, she cannot justify paying rent. Part of the reason she lives as she does is to show others the freedom squatting offers.

"A lot of it is rejecting the system that says you have to work 40 hours a week to survive," Izzy says.

"There's such a fear of not having guaranteed food and shelter. It is trying to create your own life and standards and not being trapped. It is believing it is better to live in abandoned buildings and eat out of Dumpsters than to be forced into a life you don't want to live and make compromises you don't want to make."

She sees her lifestyle as temporary—a way to live until society is politically restructured.

"It is important to recognize that eating out of Dumpsters depends on the system," she says. "The system has to be there for people to throw away ridiculous amounts of food and whole buildings. People are trying to figure out ways to change the system so it's not so horrible and wasteful. I don't see squatting and Dumpster diving as ends in themselves. They allow you space outside of the system."

Perhaps because of her background, she thinks about the image she projects to middle class people. She is constantly aware of how her politics and lifestyle mesh, and of how she can influence others.

"I don't like spare changing because it gives people the idea



that you need money to live and that if you don't work, you have to beg," she says.

She wants people in corporate jobs to see that her way of life is better and to drop out. She holds work in high esteem—but only work that is done passionately, that holds importance for the person doing the labor.

"The idea that a CEO's life is a hundred times more valuable than yours - that's dehumanizing," she says. "A lot more dehumanizing than eating food out of a Dumpster."

Sam, a 31-year-old who shares Izzy's passion for train-riding and radical politics, maintains a stable life with a part-time job and a fixed address. He is well-versed in anarchist socialist ideology, but politics is never an abstraction for him. When a drunk, heavy-set man lumbers over to him at the Hard Times Café at 10 a.m. and asks for breakfast money, Sam hands over a \$5 bill. With a gleeful "thank you," the man hugs Sam's head, leaving his hair, unkempt from a bicycle helmet, matted down.

As a member of the International Workers of the World, Sam sees clear ties to the labor movement and a life on the rails. The IWW formed in 1905 with the goal of ending wage distribution by turning factories over to workers. Though they urged workers to sabotage the workplace, IWW members—or Wobblies, as they were called—were more often the victims of violence than the perpetrators of it.

After a narrow decision in 1908 to accept the Socialist Party, many middle-of-the-road laborers abandoned the IWW. Viewing migrant laborers as naturally sympathetic to the IWW cause, the Wobblies began aggressively recruiting hobos. Many believed in the union, but carrying a red card—the official sign of membership—could earn a beating from the ever-suspicious railroad police, known as bulls.

Ninety years later, a bull patted down Sam in a yard in Aurora, Illinois. He found his red card, looked it over and asked, "What's this?"

In another era, the cop would have known exactly what it was.

"It made me reflect on how strange history is," Sam says.

Like Sam, Wedge, 22, looks less punk than many of today's young riders. He makes himself look straight to avoid police attention, keeping his hair buzzed and face cleanly shaved. He wears army-style pants that are durable yet mainstream-looking and he appears remarkably put together for someone who rarely changes clothes.

He received an education degree from the University of Indiana, but resents the constraints earning it put on his time. While he likes learning, he considers his submission to the system a compromise. Using freight trains as a means of public transportation pleases him more than his accomplishments in school.

Like Izzy, his way of life is an ethical choice.

"I'm already privileged in this society because I'm white and male," Wedge says. "I have more choices. But I don't think this society is ecologically sustainable, so I think it's going to fail at some point."

He scrounges through trash for most of what he needs, but resorts to other means for certain gear, such as camping equipment. Turning his shirt inside out to the clean side, he heads to the back of an REI camping store, snatching a \$210 water filter on his way. He tells the clerk he lost his receipt and receives store credit for it, which he cashes in for a sleeping bag and cover. On his way out, he nabs a new pair of tennis shoes.

When shoplifting, he targets chain stores and leaves local stores like co-ops alone. To an extent, he views shoplifting as a way to attack corruption—but mostly he just considers it inconsequential.

"It's not always a political act," he says. "I just don't feel bad about taking it. I would have no problem stealing from Target because I don't think they care. And you're not hurting anyone -

you're not hurting the workers, you're not hurting the corporate power structure. ... [But] I don't scam or steal that much because it's just another form of consumerism." Like train hopping, shoplifting fits into a bigger picture for Wedge. If there is a political side to it, there is one to all facets of his life.

"The reason I would choose to sleep on a rooftop or in the woods or crash on a friend's floor or steal some fancy new shoes instead of buy them is because, by doing those things, I'm setting myself free," he says. "If I want to jump a train and go to Oregon, I can do it because I don't have

those responsibilities. I don't think I'm lazy. I don't just sit there and watch TV. I'm guaranteeing my freedom by doing this. I learn things every day."

Chris is not politically active, but he and Wedge share certain values, such as an aversion to material goods. Chris snatches the corner of his Hawaiian shirt, a vibrant blue despite the layers of grime.

"This shirt is a kick-me-down," he says, then peels back the layers of T-shirts beneath it, declaring which ones were given to him and which ones were Dumpstered. A safety pin keeps the fly of his worker's pants clasped. For more serious repairs, he uses his sewing kit.

"There's no reason to make new clothes," Chris says. "I wear one pair of pants and it lasts me eight to 10 months. I don't want stuff and I don't want to get stuff."

Despite this attitude, he calls himself a packrat. On this leg of his never-ending journey he lugs around both a ukulele and a bicycle; the bike limits what trains he can ride, but otherwise expands his mobility. Everything is a matter of self-reliance, down to his piercings. His earlobes hang down half an inch each, with tiny hoops covering the thin strips of skin at the bottom of the

**"It is important to recognize that eating out of Dumpsters depends on the system," she says. "The system has to be there for people to throw away ridiculous amounts of food and whole buildings. People are trying to figure out ways to change the system so it's not so horrible and wasteful. I don't see squatting and Dumpster diving as ends in themselves. They allow you space outside of the system."**



lobes. Above and below his lip and in either cheek he has embedded chunks of an antler. His tongue piercing gives him a slight lisp. Dozens of tight necklaces—including an entire bicycle chain—encircle his neck.

Eventually he wants to live as an agrarian so that he can completely support himself, but for now he devotes his time to finding out about trains and train culture. Wherever he stops, he seeks out libraries so he can read hobo narratives. While many young riders stick to their own kind, Chris mingles with older hobos and illegal immigrants because he believes everyone on the rails is a fellow traveler.

"It's more of a class issue," he says. "We're all on the same side of the gun."

Sitting at a picnic table behind a Minneapolis café that gives away food after the lunch rush, he speaks jubilantly about a discarded hobo custom known as the 'Frisko Circle. Riders threw all their money and food stamps into the middle of the circle, then collectively decided what they most needed to buy. He holds it as the embodiment of a truism of the road: "If you want to be an outlaw, you've got to be honest."

Chris says that even if the railroads crack down on transients, the lifestyle will survive. Union Pacific might have a zero tolerance policy on the books, but often enforcement is lax. Besides, by giving a fake name, train hoppers can elude most problems with the police. Chris is not worried about the new generation of rail cars, which have little room for stowaways.

"They're not going to replace cars every year," he says. "There's always going to be boxcars. Because of money, they can't fix them all. You can't pay to have a cop everywhere—though cell phones have made everyone a cop."

One hundred years ago, the shifting populations of hobo camps, or jungles, provided a way for arriving travelers to find out about yards and rail lines. Tramps also passed on such information through cryptic graffiti, though that might be distorted by mythology. Today, with fewer riders, it's not possible to keep jungles thriving, but like other parts of society, transient culture has been revolutionized by the Information Age.

Chris views the Crew Change—a guide started by a Chicago railfan known as the Train Doctor—as a way to move an oral tradition into printed form. The 2000 edition is a 76-page compendium that tells riders everything they need to know about yards across the country: how to get to them, where to hide while they wait, how heavily policed they are, where trains are going. Travelers consider the book essential, even though its timetables cannot be relied upon because the railroads rarely run as scheduled. Waiting for trains for hours, or days, is not uncommon.

Travelers distribute the Crew Change in a primitive but organic way, handing it off as one train hopper meets another. The guide urges users to charge others only the cost of photocopying

it and to keep it underground. Chris is typically laconic, though he will say it began in the late 1980s as a photocopied collection of handwritten journals. In 1995, the Train Doctor's associates transferred the information onto computer discs, making it easier to update.

"The idea of centralizing [information] has always been there," Chris says. "It's just easier now with the technology."

The manual comes out annually but one- or two-page updates are issued as needed. Because of the haphazard distribution method, various editions remain in circulation. "It's not the Crew Change Guide, it's a Crew Change Guide," Chris says. "There are many."

The Crew Change is the Bible of young travelers, though they also devour the how-to books that come and go. Daniel Leen's *The Freighthopper's Manual for North America* taught riders in the 1980s the rudiments of getting started—without warning of train hopping's dangers. Duffy Littlejohn's more thorough *Hopping Freight Trains in America*, published in 1993, clued in many of the current batch of riders, but is on the verge of going out of print.

About five years ago train-hopping Web sites emerged, but many have been taken down because authorities can easily access them. Today a few sites still exist, guiding riders to maps and timetables put out by the railroads, but only alluding to the nuts and bolts of riding. Travelers primarily use the Internet as a bulletin board to keep in touch, restricting crucial information to private e-mails. They maintain a list-serve, which riders can join only if nominated—a measure that ensures they will

not be infiltrated by the railroad police. To update friends on travel plans, they use free voicemail services.

Chris sees train riding as the extension of a long tradition. Today's riders mirror the political usurpers, migrant workers and petty criminals who hopped trains in the early 20th century. The survival of railroad slang—"unit" for an engine, "side-door Pullman" for a boxcar, "catching out" for hopping trains—symbolizes that continuity.

The main difference between today's young riders and the hobos of the past is their attitude toward work. The etymology of "hobo" is unknown, but some lexicographers speculate that it comes from "hoe boy," an 18th century English migrant worker. Train riders took pride in the title, and saw themselves as distinct from tramps—on-the-move freeloaders who refused to work—and bums who stayed in one place. Young riders today do not define themselves in such terms. Some oppose wage-earning on ethical grounds and some shun it out of laziness. Some enjoy work, but most consider getting by labor enough.

Contrary to his usual work habits, Guy, who grew up with Bree in Lubbock, Texas, has taken a job helping to remodel a house. His stopover in Minneapolis has grown into a longer stay,



and the work, which involves tearing out lots of drywall, seems fun. He hates the routine of full-time jobs, the being there at 8 a.m. and staying until 5 p.m., but doesn't mind short-term gigs.

As soon as he earns his first paycheck, Guy goes to Nightfall Records, a ramshackle store that specializes in obscure heavy metal. Since seeing Gummo, Guy has been checking out lots of Norwegian black metal. He buys a used, long-sleeve Emperor T-shirt and pulls it over the layers of black shirts he already wears. His jeans, too, are black, with small white X's stitched along the seams. Curly hair juts out from beneath his black stocking cap, blending in with the beard that frames his face.

Though he has been in Minneapolis longer than intended, the town has treated him well. Scoring food and other amenities is easy - someone already gave him both a bike and some weed. But now he is unsure of how much longer will be welcome at the punk flophouse where he has been staying. Eddie, a local who Guy has been hanging out with, has just been kicked out because of his reputation and propensity to urinate in his sleep after too many drinks. Guy fears he might be evicted as well, so he packs up.

Shoving his few articles of clothing into his pack and rolling up the expensive sleeping bag his mother gave him for Christmas, he heads onto the screened-in porch off of the cluttered living room. He sits down, plays a tape by At the Gates, lights a bowl and muses about work.

"I just don't like to work," he says. "I don't mind it, but I'd rather be loafing around. ... I just want to have fun instead of dealing with all the stress."

He sinks into his chair and enjoys the warm June evening air. He doesn't know where he will sleep tonight, but two years on the road have inured him to such conditions.

"It's like nothing to me," he says.

Besides, Guy is itchy to leave town. He plans to meet Bree in Fargo, N.D., at the Testicle Festival, a week-long birthday party notorious for the number of bands that play and the 10-keg free-for-all that concludes the event.

Every day for more than a week, Guy and Eddie mention they are leaving in a couple of days, but they never solidify their plans. When they arrive one day at the café with bulging backpacks, Tommy, a Michigan rider headed west, makes arrangements to meet them in two hours in the open lot next to the café.

Tommy pedals off to the suburban house where he is staying to get his pack.

As they pull into the lot an hour and 45 minutes later, Eddie picks up a bottle of Grain Belt Premium lying in the street. He cracks it open, takes a sip, then thinks better of it.

"For all the dead homies," he says in a self-deprecating voice, pouring the beer out at the base of a tree.

Guy removes a small boom box from his pack and plays the 2Pac and Hawkwind tapes he bought on a final shopping binge. Over his other shirts he wears a new Burzum shirt emblazoned with a hazy graveyard. Eddie tugs on the chain that dangles from his camouflage shorts.

After 15 minutes, they grow antsy waiting for Tommy. Summer storms have been rolling in suddenly for the past few weeks and they dread a wet trip to Fargo. Rumors of busts have circulated for the last several days - with so many people coming into town for the party, bulls have been picking train hoppers off the cars easily. Guy and Eddie have put off leaving for days, and now

the need to get out of town feels urgent. Watching rush hour traffic, they decide hitchhiking will be an easier way to get to Fargo. They pack up and ride off, with plans to ditch their bikes at the edge of the suburbs. As Guy and Eddie slide onto the road, their furthest thought is Tommy, who approaches the lot a few minutes later.

Like many train hoppers, Guy disparages hitchhiking. Unlike jumping trains, hitchhiking makes travelers reliant on others, which opens up too many variables for his taste. He has never been threatened or propositioned for sex, as some of his friends have, but he has encountered his fill of evangelists.

On trains the annoyances may be fewer, but the danger is heightened. A life on the rails requires a tough exterior and, if provoked, Guy is quick to pull out his Gerber knife. Guy says that by knowing his limitations and keeping his wits about him, he remains safe.

"No train is worth risking your neck for," Guy says. All of Guy's safety lessons were learned firsthand. When he and Bree decided to catch out for the first time, in San Antonio, they pulled themselves onto a boxcar that had already been staked out by an old tramp named Mike. Even though they had broken the rule of etiquette that says riders never get on an occupied car without





first asking, Mike welcomed them and shared his two joints. They got all the way to Tucson in a day, but got busted by the notorious Fast Freddie in the yard. Fifteen minutes later they discarded their tickets and sneaked back in the yard.

As a train took off, Mike jumped on a grainer. Guy chased it, but it was moving faster than he could run. To gauge a train's speed, seasoned riders watch the bolts on the wheels; if they can make out the individual bolts, the train is moving at a safe speed. Guy hadn't learned this lesson yet.

"I ran alongside and just jumped," Guy says. "Dumbest thing I've ever done. Except for what I'm about to tell you I did next."

Guy wasn't sure if Bree had made it on, so when the train stopped a little later, he walked up and down the train, calling Bree's name. Bree did the same, but they missed each other.

Guy pulled his pack off the grainer and moved into an empty boxcar, where he built a mattress out of cardboard. When the train started moving, the car violently shook from side to side, giving him first a stomachache, then a headache. He drifted in and out of sleep, and when he woke up, the door had slid most of the way shut. He crept toward the door, but didn't want to get too close for fear of being thrown out. As he stood in front of it, the corroded door slammed shut. Guy clawed at it. He tried to pry it open with his knife, but the blade snapped off. Three or four or five hours passed—it was hard to keep track of time—before the train pulled into a small yard. Through holes that had rusted through the door, Guy could see a bicyclist 50 yards off. He kicked and punched the door, screaming for help. The bicyclist told him to wait—as if Guy could do anything else—and returned a few minutes later with the bull.

"He takes me, he puts me in his car and he says, 'I should take you to jail, but I think you've learned your lesson,'" Guy says.

Guy believes he has. He avoids boxcars and refuses to ride them unless the door is spiked open. Even then he likes to leave a piece of plywood along the door track in case the spike breaks.

Bree agrees that railroads are dangerous, but says they offer tremendous freedom. Bree tries to explain this to Howard, who is buying drinks for him and Lars in a Chicago bar. A slight man in a short-sleeved button-down and straw hat, Howard discusses train riding with them, dominating the conversation even though he is talking to two experienced riders. He lectures them on the Freight Train Riders of America, a gang rumored to beat up other transients, basing his comments on a television documentary he has seen—a documentary that Bree was interviewed for. The few bits of gossip about the FTRA that Bree edges into the conversation are accepted by Howard as proof of his point.

But Bree says a life on the rails is worth those perils.

"I really don't think the risks are that big a threat," Bree says. "I don't have to pay rent, pay bills, pay for gas. The only thing I have to do is make sure I feed myself. It gives me the freedom to be alone. The freedom to travel."

A cover band starts and the conversation ebbs. During the break, Bree persuades the bassist to let Lars play a song and 20 minutes later, Lars, with a borrowed guitar in hand, quietly introduces "One More Broken Bottle." As the patrons talk over the song, Bree charges toward the front of the room, as if he were seeing his favorite band perform.

After a couple more drinks, Bree and Lars spill onto the sidewalk, where Friday night revelers provide a perfect opportunity

for the Beverly Game. Lars approaches a stranger.

"Beverly?" he asks tentatively, as if she looks familiar.

He and Bree greet others on the street. In reply they receive expressions of confusion and bemusement. After a few tries, Bree pounces in front of a young woman.

"Beverly!" he exclaims, with arms out to his side, a convincing I-can't-believe-it's-Beverly tone of glee in his voice. "Don't you remember me? We went to school together."

For two blocks they continue, expanding the game to include any name that comes to mind. At the corner, they slip into a lively gay club. Writhing to the beat, they work their way across the dance floor and climb onto the small stage at one end. They remove their shoes and socks and step into the kiddy pool the club has provided. As they dance, they kick out droplets of water, which freeze in the strobe lights before spraying the dancers near the stage, who step back, laughing.

Returning to the street, Lars plunges his arm into a trashcan and comes out with an umbrella. As they parade down the street, he aims it at passers-by, then pops it open. He rushes toward a man across the street. "Now for my Mary Poppins impersonation," he calls, unleashing the umbrella.

The man walks on, as if he hasn't heard, unsure of this late-night loose nut.

"What? That doesn't even get a smile?" Lars asks. And then it does. He turns over his shoulder, smiling, yes, I see, you're not dangerous, just having fun.

Emboldened by beer, Bree turns spare-changing into street theater. He runs up to a man, turns on his heel and, walking alongside him, says, "I'm with the Ghetto Watch Patrol and I'm going to have to issue you a citation for getting too many sexy women, smoking too many doobies and listening to too much funky music." Later that night, they look for a place to sleep outside of Gary, Ind. They can't find the trainyard—the next morning they will learn there is no yard in Gary—but they come across an electrically powered commuter line that offers good shelter. By a park-and-ride station, the tracks go under a bridge, always a reliable roof. Lars lays out a mattress of foam and cardboard in a patch of muscadine grapes. They had used the cardboard earlier that day to fly a sign. It read:

### **HUNGRY - BROKE WILL DESIGN WEB PAGE FOR FOOD HOMELESS DOT-COMMERS**

They lie behind the cement support of the bridge, where they are hidden from the train. Brush obscures the view from the parking lot.

Light breaks through the gray clouds. Birds chirp in the distance, mixing with the static pitter-patter of the electric lines, which deceives them into thinking it is raining. Lars and Bree pull their sleeping bags over their heads to keep out the light and sound and mosquitoes. They have vague plans. They want to go east, through the Appalachians, but they are not sure how they will get there. With no yard in Gary, they either have to make their way back to Chicago or hitchhike to another town in Indiana.

But that is a worry for tomorrow afternoon, when they get up. Actually, it isn't a worry at all.



# Don't Ask, Don't Tell: The Story We Weren't Allowed to Air

By Jane Akre

*In "Don't Ask, Don't Tell: The Story We Weren't Allowed to Tell" and "An Uphill Battle: Our Lawsuit Against Fox" Jane Akre provides a firsthand account of her experiences standing up to corporate and media powers that have attempted to silence her and her husband, Steve Wilson. Despite winning a landmark whistleblower lawsuit against the television station that fired them, their former network continues its legal efforts to reverse the ruling and crush them financially. Steve Wilson and Jane Akre have created a website ([www.foxBGHsuit.com](http://www.foxBGHsuit.com)) that includes a downloadable video of their suppressed news story, plus court documents and other facts about their case. These essays have been reprinted from Volume 7, Number 4 of PR Watch, a quarterly newsletter of "Public Interest Reporting on the PR/ Public Affairs Industry." Subscriptions are \$35/year from: Center for Media and Democracy, 520 University Avenue, Suite 310, Madison, WI 53703. Web site: [www.prwatch.org](http://www.prwatch.org) E-mail: [editor@prwatch.org](mailto:editor@prwatch.org)*

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The truth is only Monsanto really knows how many US farmers are presently using their recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH). The company persistently refuses to release sales figures, but claims it has now become the largest-selling dairy animal drug in America. The chemical giant's secretive operations were part of what made the story of rBGH such a compelling one for me to explore as an investigative reporter.

In late 1996, my husband Steve Wilson and I were hired as investigative journalists for the Fox-owned television station in Tampa, Florida. Looking for projects to pursue, I soon learned that millions of Americans and their children who consume milk from rBGH-treated cows have unwittingly become participants in what amounts to a giant public health experiment. Despite promises from grocers that they would not buy rBGH milk "until it gains widespread acceptance," I discovered and carefully documented how those promises were quietly broken immediately after they were made three years earlier. I also learned that health concerns raised by scientists around the world have never been settled, and indeed, the product has been outlawed or shunned in every other major industrialized country on the planet.

Clearly, there is not "widespread acceptance" of rBGH, not in 1996 when I began my research, and not today. By any standard it was a solid story, but little did I know that it would become the last story of my 19-year broadcast journalism career and the heart of a dispute that could nearly destroy me and my family.

Steve helped me gather and produce a TV report based on the information we discovered. The investigation began with random visits to seven farms to determine whether and how widely rBGH was being used in Florida. I confirmed its use at every one of the seven farms I visited, and then I discovered what amounted to an ingenious public relations campaign that seemed to have succeeded in keeping consumers in the dark. Remember those Florida grocers who promised consumers that milk from hormone-treated cows would not end up in the dairy case until it achieved widespread acceptance from consumers and others? I learned that behind the scenes, those grocers and the major co-ops of Florida's dairymen had pulled the wool over the eyes of consumers with what amounted to a clever "don't ask, don't tell" policy combined with some



careful wording to answer any inquiries about the milk.

In an on-camera interview, the president of one of the two giant dairy co-ops in the state said that he had written a letter to dairymen on behalf of grocers requesting that farmers not inject their cows with the artificial growth hormone. But in response to my questions, the co-op president made a startling confession. He admitted he did nothing but write the letter!

"Did the dairymen get back to you?" I asked.

"No."

"What was their response?"

"They accepted it, I guess. They didn't respond."

To this day, any consumer who calls to inquire gets essentially the same well-coordinated response from a big Florida grocer or their dairy supplier: "We've asked our suppliers not to use it (rBGH)," they say. It is a truthful but incredibly misleading statement that nearly always produces the desired result, leading consumers to the false conclusion that their local milk supply is unaffected by rBGH use.

Even if you ask directly, "How much of your milk comes from cows injected with an artificial growth hormone?" we discovered that you are still likely to be misled or lied to.

Steve recently made an inquiry to the dairy co-op that supplies the milk served to our daughter and her classmates in their school cafeteria. First he was told there was 0% artificial rBGH use. Then a woman in the dairy's Quality Assurance department offered the assurance that rBGH is not used at all "as far as we know." Pressed further, she said the co-op "does not recommend it because cows do just fine without," but ultimately admitted that "the co-ops have no authority to check whether it is or is not being used."

Steve pressed further: "Couldn't you just ask the dairy farmers who supply your milk whether or not they are injecting their cows?"

A long silence followed. Finally, the reply: "I suppose we could, but they could just lie to us."

## LAWYERED UP

After nearly three months of investigation that took me to interviews in five states, we produced a four-part series that Fox scheduled to begin on Monday, February 24, 1997. Station managers were so proud of the work that they saturated virtually every radio station in the Tampa Bay area with thousands of dollars worth of ads urging viewers to watch. But then, on the Friday evening prior to the broadcast, the station's pride turned to panic when a fax arrived from a Monsanto attorney.

The letter minced no words in charging that Steve and I had "no scientific competence" to report our story. Monsanto's attorney described our news reports, which he had ostensibly never seen, as a series of "recklessly made accusations that Monsanto has engaged in fraud, published lies about food safety, attempted to bribe government officials in a neighboring country and has been 'buying' favorable opinions about the product or its characteristics from reputable scientists in their respective fields."

And to make sure nobody missed the point, the attorney also reminded Fox News CEO Roger Ailes that our behavior as investigative journalists was particularly dangerous "in the aftermath of the Food Lion verdict." He was referring, of course, to the then-



Jane Akre and Steve Wilson

recent case against ABC News that sent a frightening chill through every newsroom in America.

The Food Lion verdict showed that even with irrefutable evidence from a hidden camera documenting the doctoring of potentially unsafe food sold to unsuspecting shoppers, a news organization that dares expose a giant corporation could still lose big in court.

Confronted with these threats, WTVT decided to "delay" the broadcast, ostensibly to double-check its accuracy. A week later after the station manager screened the report, found no major problems with its accuracy and fairness, and set a new air date, Fox received a second letter from Monsanto's attorney claiming that "some of the points" we were asking about "clearly contain the elements of defamatory statements which, if repeated in a broadcast, could lead to serious damage to Monsanto and dire consequences for Fox News."

Never mind that I carried a milk crate full of documentation to support every word of our proposed broadcast. Our story was pulled again, and if not dead, it was clearly on life support as Fox's own attorneys and top-level managers, fearful of a legal challenge or losing advertiser support, looked for some way to discreetly pull the plug.

The station where we worked had recently been purchased by Fox, and we soon discovered that the new management had a radically different definition of media responsibility than anything we had previously encountered in our journalistic careers. As Fox took control, it fired the station manager who had originally hired us and replaced him with Dave Boylan, a career salesman devoid of any roots in journalism and seemingly lacking in the devotion to serving the public interest which motivates all good investigative reporting.

## KILL THE STORY, KILL THE MESSENGER

Not long after Boylan became the new station manager, Steve and I went up to see him in his office. He promised to look into the trouble we were having getting our rBGH story on the air, but when we returned a few days later his strategy seemed clear.

"What would you do if I killed your rBGH story?" he asked. What he really wanted to know was whether we would tell anyone the real reason why he was killing the story. In other words,



would we leak details of the pressure from Monsanto that led to a coverup of what the station had already ballyhooed as important health information every customer should know?

It was suddenly and unmistakably clear that Boylan's biggest concern was the concern of every salesman no matter what product he peddles: image. He understood that it could not be good for the station's image if word leaked out that powerful advertisers backed by threatening attorneys could actually determine what gets on the six o'clock news—and what gets swept under the rug.

Boylan was in a jam. If he ran an honest story and Monsanto's threatened "dire consequences" did materialize, his career could be crippled. On the other hand, if he killed the story and the sordid details leaked out, he risked losing the only product any newsroom has to sell: its own credibility.

To resolve this dilemma, Boylan devised the sort of "solution" that you might expect from a salesman. He offered us a deal. He would pay us for the remaining seven months of our contracts in exchange for an agreement that we would broadcast the rBGH story in a way that would not upset Monsanto. Fox lawyers would essentially have the final say on the exact wording of our report, and once it aired, we were free to do whatever we pleased—as long as we forever kept our mouths shut about the entire ugly episode.

As journalists, Steve and I wanted to get the story on the air more than anything. A buyout, no matter how attractive, was out of the question. Neither of us could fathom taking money to shut up about a public health issue that absolutely and by any standard deserved to see the light of day.

The remainder of 1997 was a tense standoff, with the station unwilling to either kill the story or to run it. Fox attorney Carolyn Forrest was sent in to review our work, with a mandate from Fox Television Stations President Mitch Stern to "take no risk" with the story. "Taking no risk" meant cutting out substance, context and information. Boylan told us to "just do what Carolyn wants" with the story, but what Carolyn really wanted to do was destroy it. We wrote the story, rewrote it, and rewrote it again, trying to come up with a version that would both remain true to the facts and satisfy the station's concerns about airing it.

## MEANWHILE, BEHIND THE SCENES

Monsanto hadn't stopped with the threatening letters. In January, I had interviewed Roger Natzke, a dairy science professor at the University of Florida. Everything had gone well. We got a tour of the "Monsanto dairy barn" at the Gainesville dairy com-

pound where Posilac had been tested in the mid-1980s. Natzke gave the product a glowing report and admitted he promoted its use to farmers through Florida's taxpayer-supported agriculture extension offices. After spending a few hours with us, Natzke gave us directions to a good lunch joint.

Natzke must have forgotten about this relatively pleasant exchange when, one month later, he called the station to complain about my reporting techniques. "She's not a reporter" was part of the phone message submitted to my boss alongside the words "St. Simon's Island." What does that mean? I asked. The assistant news director, apparently not seeing any connection or conflict, told me that Natzke had just returned from a weekend at the island resort with Monsanto officials.

The same week that Natzke called and the Monsanto threat letters arrived, Florida farmer Joe Wright wrote a complaint letter to the station. This time we were not shown the correspondence.

Only in the light of our lawsuit did the station have to produce it in "discovery" one year later. The pieces of the puzzle behind the Monsanto pressure began falling into place.

Wright, who had spent five minutes on the phone with me a month earlier, informed the station that "Ms. Acre's" (sic) work is gaining notoriety in our dairy industry. . . . The word is clearly out on the street that Ms. Acre is on a negative campaign based on everyone's assessment of the numerous interviews she has already conducted." Wright had reached these conclusions after attending the 22nd Annual Southern Dairy Conference in Atlanta, a "Who's Who" of the dairy industry where our report was the topic of intense discussion.

Following the conference, he went to Dairy Farmers Inc., a dairy promotion group which helped draft his letter of complaint to my employers, and discussed filing a food disparagement suit against the station should the story air.

Behind the scenes, a much more stealthy attack on us and our story was launched by the Dairy Coalition, a pro-rBGH group formed around the time of Posilac's FDA approval. Its director, Dick Weiss, took a call from Steve in 1998 and—not realizing exactly who Steve Wilson was—bragged that the Dairy Coalition had "swamped the station" with all sorts of pressure to have the story killed. As he recounted the story, Weiss laughed like a college kid who had just pulled the best prank in the flat.

## GETTING THE BOOT

Nearly a full year passed as we wrangled over this important public health story. After turning down the station's buyout offer we ended up doing 83 rewrites of the story, not one of which was



# CREATING THE DAIRY COALITION

by Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber

Created by the Washington, DC-based PR and lobby firm of Capitoline/MS&L, the Dairy Coalition was an ad hoc coalition of drug and dairy industry groups, including university researchers funded by Monsanto as well as other carefully selected "third party" experts. Participants included:

- The International Food Information Council, which calls itself "a non-profit organization that disseminates sound, scientific information on food safety and nutrition to journalists, health professionals, government officials and consumers." In reality, IFIC is a public relations arm of the food and beverage industries, which provide the bulk of its funding. Its staff members hail from industry groups such as the Sugar Association and the National Soft Drink Association, and it has repeatedly led the defense for controversial food additives including monosodium glutamate, aspartame (Nutrasweet), food dyes, and olestra.
- The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, representing the top executive of every department of agriculture in all 50 states.
- The American Farm Bureau Federation, the powerful conservative lobby behind the movement to pass food disparagement laws like the one under which Oprah Winfrey was sued in Texas.
- The American Dietetic Association, a national association of registered dietitians that works closely with IFIC and hauls

in large sums of money advocating for the food industry. Its stated mission is to "improve the health of the public," but with 15 percent of its budget—more than \$3 million—coming from food companies and trade groups, it has learned not to bite the hand that feeds it. "They never criticize the food industry," says Joan Gussow, a former head of the nutrition education program at Teachers College at Columbia University. The ADA's website even contains a series of "fact sheets" about various food products, sponsored by the same corporations that make the products (Monsanto for biotechnology; Procter & Gamble for olestra; Ajinomoto for MSG; the National Association of Margarine Manufacturers for fats and oils).

- The Grocery Manufacturers of America, the country's leading trade association for the food and beverage industries. Its member companies account for more than \$460 billion in sales annually in the United States. GMA itself is a lobbying powerhouse in Washington, spending \$1.4 million for that purpose in 1998.

- The Food Marketing Institute, a trade association of food retailers and wholesalers, whose grocery store members representing three fourths of grocery sales in the United States.

Excerpted from *Trust Us, We're Experts: How Industry Manipulates Science and Gambles With Your Future*, by Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber (New York, NY: Tarcher/Putnam, January 2001).

acceptable according to Fox lawyers, who were fully in charge of the editing process. "It was like being circus dogs jumping through hoops," Steve said.

At the first window in our contracts, December 2, 1997, we were both fired, allegedly for "no cause." However, an angry Carolyn Forrest made a major legal mistake when she wrote a letter spelling out the "definite reasons" for the firing, and characterizing our response to her proposed editorial changes as "unprofessional and inappropriate conduct." As Steve commented when he read the letter, just what is the "professional and appropriate" response that reporters should make when their own station asks them to lie on television?

On April 2, 1998, we filed a whistleblower lawsuit against Fox Television. Under Florida state law, a whistleblower is an

employee, regardless of his or her profession, who suffers retaliation for refusing to participate in illegal activity or threatening to report that illegal activity to authorities. We contended that we were entitled to protection as whistleblowers because the distortions our employers wanted us to broadcast were not in the public interest and violated the law and policy of the Federal Communications Commission.

Three months after we were fired and six weeks after we filed our lawsuit, the station finally got around to airing an rBGH story, filled with many of the same lies and distortions that Steve and I refused to broadcast. The reports, aired by a young and inexperienced reporter, looked to us like nothing more than damage control instigated by Fox attorneys.



# An Uphill Battle: Our Lawsuit Against Fox

Going to court against a powerful conglomerate like the Fox network is a daunting experience, and Fox knows how to intimidate people. Prior to our dismissal, Dave Boylan had flaunted the company's wealth in an attempt to make us back down. "We paid three billion for these stations," he told us on one occasion. "We'll tell you what the news is. The news is what we say it is!"

After Fox local counsel Patricia Anderson lost two major efforts to have the suit derailed, the network apparently decided it needed bigger, smarter, meaner lawyers. They turned to William McDaniels and the Washington firm of Williams and Connolly, the same firm that Bill Clinton used to help him through Whitewater, Monica Lewinski, and his famous redefinition of the word "is." Six weeks before the start of the trial, Williams and Connolly camped out on the top two floors of the Hyatt Hotel in downtown Tampa. Using more than a dozen lawyers and some of the top firms around the country to help with various pre-trial chores, Fox staff lawyers flew back and forth between Los Angeles and Tampa regularly.

On our side of the aisle, of course, there was no money to afford suites at the Hyatt. About the same time that Williams and Connolly swept into town, the lawyer we had asked to represent our interests before the jury decided it was time to demand an upfront payment of \$50,000. We simply didn't have it, so we fired that attorney. Steve decided to represent himself in court, and I obtained representation from John Chamblee and Tom Johnson, labor attorneys who operate out of an old house in the downtown area.

## CRAZY LIKE A FOX

The Fox legal strategy was woven tightly from day one and helped by a well-coordinated team effort. They claimed that we had turned our backs on the story and were using the whistleblower claim as a "tactic." We missed deadlines, they said, and had told managers and lawyers we were "going to get Monsanto." They also claimed that we became convinced that rBGH milk causes cancer, that we became advocates instead of objective, reporters of the controversy.

None of that was true. Our story did bring forth information

that had been suppressed for far too long: that a spin-off hormone in the altered milk has been linked to tumor proliferation; that consumers did not have the benefit of labeling at the grocery store shelf because Monsanto had sued two small dairies to block it; and that the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine, which reviewed the drug, did not do long-term human toxicity tests. The cancer questions to this day remain unanswered. The human effects are, in essence, being tested on consumers in the marketplace.

The Fox effort, though united, was not flawless. Fox news

vice president Phil Metlin told the six-person jury that if he ever learned a news organization was trying to eliminate risk by using a threatening letter as a "roadmap" to craft a story, such news would "make me want to throw up." But just days later, on the stand, a local attorney for Fox admitted he did just that, using Monsanto directives to help craft the rBGH story. Metlin actually turned white. He also didn't score any points with his bosses when he admitted that he found no errors in our reporting

of that rBGH story, and he saw no reason why our final version of the story could not be aired.

Dave Boylan had to be flown into town for his testimony. On the eve of the trial, Fox rewarded him with a promotion to general manager of the Fox-owned station in Los Angeles. The man who had told us "we paid three billion for these stations, we'll tell you what the news is," lost his bravado on the stand, shooting quick, nervous smiles at the jurors while checking in with the defense team after every answer.

During our cross-examination of Boylan, it helped that Steve knew exactly what had transpired during 1997. Earlier in the trial, it had been estimated that lost revenue in advertising from Monsanto ads for Roundup or NutraSweet could have cost the station about \$50,000. Fox bragged that \$50,000 was nothing for an organization of its size, but Steve's relentless interrogation of Boylan showed that the actual cost of going up against Monsanto could have been much higher.

"You testified Fox owns 23 stations?" Steve asked.

"Yes," Boylan answered.

"Could Monsanto pull advertising off all 23?"

"Yes."



**Dave Boylan, station manager at Fox WTVT, asked "What would you do if I killed your rBGH story?"**



"And the Fox News Channel?"

"Yes."

"And the Sky Channel in Europe?"

"Yes."

"It could extend beyond \$50,000?"

"It could," Boylan admitted.

## THUMP, THUMP

Fox attorney Bill McDaniels earned the nickname "Thumper" from our team because he made an audible noise with his foot whenever he got nervous.

There was a lot of thumping during the presentation of our case, particularly when Ralph Nader took time from his presidential campaign to serve as an expert witness. Fox had tried unsuccessfully, through objections, to have Nader eliminated as a witness.

Nader told jurors what the FCC has repeatedly said that it is "a most heinous act" to use the public's airwaves to slant, distort and falsify the news. "A reporter has a legal duty to act in accordance with the Communications Act of 1934 and in addition to their professional responsibility to be accurate, not to be used as an instrument of deception to the audience," Nader said.

McDaniels also objected vehemently to Walter Cronkite's inclusion as an expert on our side. The Fox counsel said, "Mr. Cronkite is not an expert in the pre-broadcast review of a story." I couldn't believe my ears. For thirty years Cronkite was the managing editor of the CBS Evening News. During Cronkite's deposition, McDaniels had asked the 83-year-old anchorman whether he was a lawyer and suggested Cronkite couldn't be an expert in the pre-broadcast review of a story unless he was an attorney.

In his deposition, Cronkite said that an ethical journalist should resist directives that would result in a false or slanted story being broadcast. "He should not go a microinch towards that sort of thing. That's a violation of every principle of good journalism," Cronkite said.

## THE RULING

The jury awarded me with \$425,000 but gave nothing to Steve, who had been forced to act as his own attorney. Steve repeatedly showed dogged determination in questioning many of the witnesses and getting them to admit some of the most damaging things that ultimately undermined the Fox defense. In the end, we suspect Steve received no award because of what seems to be an erroneous instruction from the judge to the jury. The jurors were told, incorrectly we believe, that in order to find for each of us, they must determine there was no other reason each of us was fired other than the fact we resisted orders to lie on the air and threatened to blow the whistle to the FCC. In any event, we view the verdict as a win for both of us. Our trial was never about money. It was about a reporter's duty to resist and blow the whistle loud and strong when pressured to lie and distort the news over the public airwaves.

Fox immediately announced that it would appeal. On October 12 and again on November 3, the network argued to the judge that he should vacate the jury's verdict. During the trial itself, McDaniels had claimed that Fox merely wanted "to get its good

## Who Is That Masked Client?

We didn't think much about it as first. A young man sat in the back of the courtroom during our five-week trial, taking careful, thorough notes. Finally Steve approached him and asked who he was, fully expecting the young man to say he was from a local law school or college. Instead he fessed up, identifying himself as Ian Davis, an intern representing the Public Strategies PR firm, based in Austin, Texas. The most famous member of Public Strategies is Clinton's former press secretary, Michael McCurry, who heads its lobbying arm in Washington, D.C. (Other Public Strategies clients include Anheuser-Busch, ARCO, Bristol-Myers Squibb, the Edison Electric Institute, Lockheed Martin, Reuters and Southwest Airlines.)

Davis said he didn't know which client he was taking notes for. He didn't know what aspect of the trial he was supposed to focus on. He didn't know how long he would be there. In fact the intern said he was just working a summer job with the group. That's why you can imagine how surprised I was when, the other day, I called the Austin office of Public Strategies to find out if Monsanto was a client, and Ian Davis answered the phone. He is still just an intern, he said, and he still didn't know who his client was.

name back" and repair the damage to its credibility which we had inflicted by telling our story on our website and speaking to groups around the world. During the Motion to Vacate, however, McDaniels seemed to toss the network's credibility in the garbage by making an argument that any legitimate news organization would be embarrassed to voice. "There is no law, rule or regulation against slanting the news," he told the judge.

The judge denied Fox's Motion to Vacate, but years of appeals lie ahead. Every indication we have received suggests that the network plans to continue its efforts to wear us down with time-consuming, tedious and expensive legal maneuvers. They have the financial wherewithal to do this, whereas we have been out of work for three years with no immediate job offers on the horizon. Somehow we will have to find a way to house and feed ourselves and our daughter while simultaneously continuing to wage a full-time battle against a media giant.

Fox will appeal first to the 2nd District Court of Appeals, then the Florida Supreme Court and eventually the U.S. Supreme Court, if it is willing to hear the case. All the while, we won't see a cent of our winnings.

And despite our victory, it is possible that Fox's army of lawyers will eventually succeed in their effort to overturn the verdict on some legal technicality. Frankly, our struggle is still a hardship shouldered almost entirely by our single family. Put that up against the \$600-an-hour Williams and Connolly lawyers who fly first class, stay in luxury hotels and have legions of legal minions to research and churn out unending briefs for us to Answer. Alas, friends, this is the way the system works. — *Jane Akre*



# Intifada 2000:





# The Palestinian Uprising

## Interview with Edward Said

By David Barsamian

*In "Intifada 2000: The Palestinian Uprising" David Barsamian interviews Edward Said regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Said is a professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University and an analyst on Middle East politics. He was a member of the Palestinian Liberation Council from 1977-1991. David Barsamian is the Director of **Alternative Radio**, an internationally syndicated, weekly one-hour public affairs program presenting "views and perspectives and analyses that are ignored and distorted by the dominant corporate-controlled media." For information about obtaining cassette copies or transcripts of this or other programs, please contact: David Barsamian, Alternative Radio, P.O. Box 551, Boulder, CO 80306; (800) 444-1977; email: [ar@orci.com](mailto:ar@orci.com) Web: [www.alternativeradio.org](http://www.alternativeradio.org)*

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Edward W. Said was born in Jerusalem, Palestine and attended schools there and in Cairo. He received his B.A. from Princeton and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Harvard. He is University Professor at Columbia. He is the author of *Oriental-ism*, *The Question of Palestine*, *Covering Islam, Culture and Imperialism*, *Representations of the Intellectual*, *The Politics of Dispossession* and *Peace and its Discontents* and *Out of Place*. His latest book is *The End of the Peace Process*.

**David Barsamian:** *In your writings and lectures on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, you constantly refer to the centrality of 1948. What do people need to know about 1948?*

**Edward Said:** I don't think you can understand what's happening today and the situation of the Palestinians unless you understand what happened in 1948. A society made up principally of Arabs in Palestine was uprooted and destroyed. Two-thirds of the Arab population of 870,000 people were driven out by design. The Zionist archives are quite clear about this, and several Israeli historians have written about it. Of course the Arabs have said it all along. By the end of the conflict in 1948, Palestinians were a minority in their own country. Two-thirds of them had become refugees, whose descendants today number about



four and a half million people scattered throughout the Arab world, Europe, Australia and North America. The balance of the people became subjects to Israeli military occupation in 1967, when the West Bank and Gaza, along with East Jerusalem, were taken over and occupied. Nineteen forty-eight for Palestinians is the date on which their search for self determination begins. It doesn't begin in 1967. That simply completed the Israeli conquest. During 1948, not only was all of the land of the Palestinians, roughly 94%, taken over militarily by the state of Israel as land for the Jewish people, which meant that the Arabs who remained and who are now roughly 18% of the population of Israel, are not entitled to hold land. Most of the land in Israel is controlled by the state for the Jewish people. Second, 400-plus Arab villages were destroyed, which were then replanted, so to speak, by Israeli settlers who built the kibbutzes. Every kibbutz in Israel is on Arab property that was taken in 1948. So the festering wound of 1948 has remained, since at the same time Israel since 1948 has said, We bear no responsibility for what happened to the Palestinians. They left because their leaders told them to. All sorts of propaganda was used. Until now, there's a general consensus that they were driven out by the Israelis. Second, there's been no attempt by the Israelis ever, even during the last meetings at Camp David in July, to consider the right of return, the central demand of every Palestinian, that he or she be allowed to return to the place from which he or she was driven out in 1948. That is the core of the whole thing.

***Talk about the framework of the public discourse. Start with "the peace process."***

The peace process began in 1993, when a secretive agreement was made between the PLO and the Israeli government to undertake to give the Palestinians and the Palestine Liberation Organization under Yasir Arafat some territory and authority in the West Bank and Gaza. However, given the tremendous disparity in power between the Israelis and the Palestinians, in effect the peace process has simply been a repackaging of the Israeli occupation. Even as we speak today, in November of 2000, Israel still controls 60% of the West Bank and 40% of Gaza. It has annexed Jerusalem and has filled the territories with settlers. Including the ones in Jerusalem there are about 350,000 Israelis who are there illegally. These are settlements and a military occupation that is the second longest in the twentieth and twenty-first century, the longest being the Japanese occupation of Korea from 1910 to 1945. So this is 33 years old, pushing the record.

Essentially, the peace process has simply involved the Palestinian leadership in accepting Israeli terms. A small redeployment of Israeli troops. The settlements continue. Jerusalem is still under Israeli sovereignty and settlement. The borders and the water are controlled by Israel. The exits and entrances are controlled by

Israel. Security is controlled by Israel. What the Americans and Israelis were doing was to get Palestinian consent to this repackaging of the occupation. It's been presented to the public as moving towards peace, whereas it's been a gigantic fraud. Only that could possibly explain the extent and depth of the Palestinian rebellion that has taken place since September 29.

### ***"Defense."***

Of course, the Israeli army is called the Israeli Defense Forces. The line has been that the Israeli army is a defensive one. Whereas in fact, very misleadingly the media have presented it as if they are defending Israel from Palestinians, who are basically throwing stones. This has an almost Orwellian quality to it. The Palestinians have no arms to speak of except for some small arms among the police. It's been a population of stone-throwing youths against Israeli missiles, helicopter gunships, tanks and rockets. The most important thing is that all the fighting has taken place on Palestinian territory. So to use the word "defense" here is a grotesque

misnomer. This is an occupation force inside Palestinian territory. The Palestinians are resisting military occupation and the Israelis are prolonging the occupation, and making, as all colonial troops have done, whether in Algeria, Vietnam or India, the civilian population pay the price of resistance.

### ***How about "terrorism"?***

It's a very ugly conflict and has been since the twenties, when the Zionists in effect introduced terrorism into Palestine.

It was one of the standard techniques of the early groups of Zionist extremists, in the twenties,

who put bombs in Arab marketplaces to terrorize the population. This led to a crescendo during the thirties and forties, when terrorism was used by the Zionists against the British to hasten their retreat from Palestine, which they of course did retreat from in 1948.

Since that time, there has been a great deal of back and forth. In all cases, it has to be remembered that despite the horrendous loss of life, and there is simply no way of excusing or making up for the innocents who have lost lives, there has been a vast preponderance of Palestinian losses. If you look at the example of the figures of the last six weeks, there have been 180 Palestinians killed and 14 Israelis. That gives you a sense of the distinction. Eight were soldiers. The Palestinians were all civilians. Terrorism in this context has been for the Palestinians the weapon of the weak and the oppressed. It has been very limited and sporadic, but amplified and blown up to grotesque proportions by the Israelis, who always try to portray themselves as the victims, whereas in fact in this conflict they are not the victims. They are the oppressors, the people who have aggressed against the Palestinians.



***The U.S. as an even-handed, honest broker.***

Israel is the only state in the world that has received U.S. military and economic aid that now roughly totals about \$170 billion. Every U.S. political figure of note, whether it's a campaigner in a small district in northern New York State or a presidential contender, has had to declare himself or herself an unconditional supporter of Israel. Declarations from the Congress, from either the Senate or the House of Representatives, automatically bring forth huge majorities in support of Israeli policy because of the power of the Israeli lobby and the fact that there is a very active and politically savvy and sensitively placed community of supporters of Israel. U.S. policy has really focused on the defense and support of Israel in all of its ventures. Something like sixty U.N. Security Council vetoes have been used by the U.S. to prevent censure of Israel in cases which are flagrant violations of international law, whether they range from torture to using helicopters and missiles against civilians to settlements and illegal annexations.

So that to say that the U.S. is an even-handed broker is a preposterous mischaracterization. The U.S. is very much in Israel's camp. All the information we have on the negotiations during the last seven years of the peace process has shown that the U.S. has presented the Israeli point of view in the discussions and remains a partisan of Israel. It should also be mentioned, by the way, that most of the officials involved in the peace process, beginning with Dennis Ross, Martin Indyk and Aaron David Miller are themselves former employees of the Israeli lobby.

***The Economist, the conservative British weekly, observed that "the new Palestinian intifada is rapidly assuming the form of a serious anti-colonial revolt." This might be the first use of that term.***

I think there was an anti-colonial revolt before during the first intifada, which took place in 1987 and was stopped by Arafat in 1993. This is certainly that. The occupation of the West Bank and Gaza with settlers and settlements and roads and the constant expropriation of Palestinian lands, the destruction of crops and olive trees to make way for roads, there designing of the geography of the West Bank to permit its greater control, all these policies have, were it not for the amnesiac U.S. media, followed the line of all classical colonialism. That is to say, to make sure that an oppressed and subordinate people are captive in their subordination for the profit and in some cases the leisure of the occupiers. So what has happened in the last six or seven weeks has been an attempt to overthrow this, including the peace process, which is, as I said, a form of repackaging of the occupation, stream-lining it so that the Israelis can control without using so many troops, frequently using Palestinians to police the people on behalf of the Israelis. That's been part of the peace process. Ironically, a lot of the question of Israeli security has been handed over to Palestinian policemen, who have to subdue precisely the people who are now the anti-colonial demonstrators. This conflagration, this enormous loss of life, can only be the result of an occupation policy that has simply destroyed the lives of people, where their only alternative has been to take to the streets and courageously, some would say, in a foolhardy way, throw stones at tanks. Unafraid.

We recall in Tianamen Square a few years ago the outcry, the world chorus of approval and support and admiration for the young Chinese who opposed the military tanks in Tianamen Square. This has not happened here. The media are so preponderantly pro-Israeli that ordinary people are not able to voice their support for what in effect is a brave attempt to overthrow a military occupation of a colonial style.

***You've pointed out that there are no maps in this most geographical of conflicts. Why are maps important?***

First of all, Palestine itself, the whole area is tiny. This conflict has been going on for fifty years. Given the notoriously small attention span of the average TV viewer or reader of newspapers, there's very little awareness of the history or the geographical topography that's been involved. Most people say, The Arabs and the Jews are back at it again, giving the notion that there are two equal sides and that one side, the Israeli, is beset and victimized. The Arabs are the ones who are assaulting and threatening. And of course the memories of the Holocaust and all the horrors of anti-Semitism hover in the background. Whereas in fact what has happened is that for all Palestinians, 1948 and the founding of the state of Israel, meant that essentially 78% of historic Palestine that was Arab has become Israeli. That's been conceded. The West Bank and Gaza together constitute 22% of historical Palestine, and this is what the current fight is over. The Palestinians are not fighting over the 78% that they've already lost. They're fighting over the 22% that remains. Of this 22%, the Israelis are still in control of 60% of the West Bank and 40% of Gaza. So if there was ever to be a Palestinian state, there would be no contiguous territory. It would all be chopped into little pieces, controlled by the roads which the Israelis have built and which are now encircling each of the Palestinian areas, which is why Palestinians today are besieged within their little territory.

The Israelis have created facts on the ground that make it impossible for Palestinians to move from one area to another, from north to south from east to west. Greater Jerusalem, which is roughly 4% of the whole territory, has been annexed by Israel and the Israelis plan not to give it back at all. The idea is that this area will be totally controlled by Israel except for municipal services and issues like health, all those problematic citizen problems that they want to give over to the Palestinian Authority. Security and borders are under Israeli control. Even today Yasir Arafat can't go in and out of Gaza without Israeli permission, and they can shut the airport, as they have, and shut the territory so that people can't move. In effect, they are being choked to death. This is the result of the peace process. This is not the result of war. This is part of the disaster of the agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinian leadership under the aegis of the U.S., which is why it's blown up.

***Where is your information coming from?***

"Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories," which is a bimonthly published in Washington. The editor is Geoffrey Aronson. It's a publication of the Foundation for Middle East Peace. It's the single most authoritative source drawn from Israeli and Palestinian and international agencies on the rate of settle-



ment building, the holding of settlements, the initiation of new settlements, the destruction of property and the increase in the settler population.

*Noam Chomsky, Alexander Cockburn, Robert Fisk and other critics of Israeli settlement policy have used the term "bantustan" in describing it.*

There's a kind of repeatable quality to this. It comes from the history of nineteenth-century colonialism. The French did this in Algeria. They would find areas where docile natives could be put in their villages with native chiefs. In West Africa the British did it under what was called "indirect rule," where they could find certain indigenous people to rule the unruly natives and you as the occupying power held the real authority. In South Africa, the idea was to put the blacks on reservations or homelands where they could have some of the attributes of sovereignty but none of the real ones. They couldn't control the land. The water was not under their control. The entrances and exits were controlled by the whites. This is exactly the pattern here. These little Palestinians

**In South Africa, the idea was to put the blacks on reservations or homelands where they could have some of the attributes of sovereignty but none of the real ones. They couldn't control the land. The water was not under their control. The entrances and exits were controlled by the whites. This is exactly the pattern here. These little Palestinians areas, which are small and divided, are centers of Palestinian population, but they are the equivalent of homelands where somebody like Arafat could have the impression, or give himself the impression, that he's the leader, but in fact the strings are pulled behind the scenes by the colonial occupier.**

areas, which are small and divided, are centers of Palestinian population, but they are the equivalent of homelands where somebody like Arafat could have the impression, or give himself the impression, that he's the leader, but in fact the strings are pulled behind the scenes by the colonial occupier.

*Ariel Sharon went to Harem El-Sharif, the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem on September 28. He was escorted by some one thousand Israeli security personnel. The visit of the former Israeli general and cabinet minister is cited as the match that ignited the new intifada. What does Sharon represent to Palestinians? What does it say about Barak in allowing Sharon to make the visit?*

Sharon in Israeli popular mythology is something of a hero. His exploits began in the fifties. He was responsible for the invasion of the town of Qibia, where they killed about 65 innocent people in their homes in retaliation for a raid on an Israeli military patrol in which 3 soldiers were killed the day before. Thereafter he went from one exploit of this sort to another. He's basically a bully who specializes in the oppression of civilians and enemies who are far less well equipped than he is. He was the pacifier of Gaza after the Israeli occupation of 1967. During the early 1970s he destroyed many homes and relocated Palestinians in order to uproot what

the Israelis said were terrorist cells but what in fact were resistance cells inside Gaza. Of course, above all, he was the architect of the invasion of Lebanon in 1982, where he misled his own cabinet into believing that they were going to just go in for a few miles whereas in fact they went into Beirut, killing in the process 17,000 people. He was cited by the Kahan Commission of Inquiry as being indirectly responsible for the massacres in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila, which were done in an area controlled by the Israelis, although the actual action was perpetrated by Lebanese Maronite militias acting under the supervision of the Israelis.

So by any standards at all Ariel Sharon is a war criminal. He's made no secret of the fact that he'd like to drive the rest of the Palestinians out and put them in Jordan. He said the solution of Palestine is what he calls the Jordanian option, to turn Jordan, which is a sovereign country, into a Palestinian state. His appearance on the Al-Aqsa mosque, which is of course held by Israel and has been annexed since 1967 in full contravention of international law and many U.N. resolutions, despite the ones vetoed by the U.S., was a provocation. The next day, Friday the 29th, right after prayers there was a demonstration against his having been

there the day before. The Israeli police opened fire on the demonstrators and killed eight civilians. Sharon was there the day before, with a thousand policemen supplied to him by Barak. It's quite clear that Barak was behind, or at least approved of the move.

*The catechism recited by the likes of Nobel Prize-winner Elie Wiesel, multiple Pulitzer Prize-winner and New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman, PBS's Charlie Rose and the Orientalist academic Bernard Lewis is pretty much like this: Camp David collapsed because of Arafat's intransigence and his failure to seize a unique opportunity. The Barak offer went way beyond anything previously proposed. It was a far-reaching and most generous compromise.*

It's simply factually untrue. Before he went, Barak made it absolutely clear that he had no intention of returning to the 1967 borders. That was the principle on which the peace process was started, that there would be a return of all the territory to the June 5, 1967 borders.

*Based on U.N. Resolution 242.*

And 338. Second, he made it absolutely clear that there would be no return of the refugees. Third, he made it absolutely clear that



there would be no return of Jerusalem to Palestinian sovereignty at all. Fourth, he made it also absolutely clear that he had no intention of uprooting any of the settlements. These are the positions on which his whole subsequent negotiation was based. It didn't depart from them. It simply consolidated them. Again, if you look at the facts rather than the suppositions made by the spin doctors of the American and Israeli media, he in fact gave back nothing of East Jerusalem. He didn't concede anything. He simply said, We will allow you a form of sovereignty in the holy places. We will keep the Christian and Armenian sections. You can have a little bit of sovereignty over some of the Muslim holy places, but the real substantive sovereignty over East Jerusalem will remain in Israeli hands. And the vast majority of the city in terms of area would remain under Israel. That was supposed to be a "forward-looking" position. He refused to take in any refugees and took no responsibility for what happened in 1948. This from the leader of a people that has exacted, correctly, reparations for what it endured in the way of anti-Semitism and suffering in World War II. He's telling the Palestinians, We don't even consider your claims. They're simply irrelevant to us. He refused categorically to give up the

*ians as losers. Barak in his Knesset speech on October 30 revived the Abba Eban comment that the Palestinians never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity.*

Israeli information, from the very beginning, has always played on two levels. On one level there's what they call hasbara, the Hebrew word for information for the goy, the foreigners. There is the depiction of Israel as forthcoming, democratic, defensive, victimized, generous and compassionate. In other words, an image crafted to appeal to the Western liberal conscience. Then on the other hand there's what Israel says to itself and what Barak says to his people. From the very beginning, whether it was Peres speaking or Rabin or Yossi Beilin or Barak or Netanyahu, they all said the same thing. They said, This is a peace process in which we lose nothing. Rabin said it just a few months before Oslo was signed in 1993. He said, I wish Gaza would sink into the sea. It's such a millstone around our necks. It's overpopulated, a million people living under the most miserable conditions. Why should we be responsible? We'll keep the best land and we'll give the rest to the Palestinians. That's the basis of Oslo. The appeal of the so-called

**You can't simply wipe the slate clean to suit you and your policy. You have to face the other party and try to take responsibility for what you did, the way everybody has. The Japanese have taken responsibility for what they did to the Koreans. The Germans for the Jews. The Poles for the Jews. In this the Israelis are not different from these people. What they've done has imposed on another people a calamity which continues to this very day, along with all the denials. No, they weren't here. This was an empty land. God gave it to us. These are just Arabs. They don't count. These arguments are still being used today.**

settlements.

Faced with this, Arafat didn't want to come to this knowing that a two-week session of this sort, which was not simply only to be a continuation of the peace process, but this was the final status. Arafat couldn't agree. Not only because of the conditions, which were terrible, but also for two other reasons. One is that Arafat was being asked to end the conflict and end any Palestinian claims against Israel and thereby ending any Muslim-Christian claims against Israel. He couldn't do it. Secondly, he was also being asked to give up Palestinian claims to return and self-determination, which again he couldn't do because simple fear of what would happen to him if he signed on. So far from it being an opportunity for Arafat to take advantage of Israeli generosity, it was an opportunity for Arafat effectively to commit suicide and to give Israel the last prize, you might say the cherry on the sundae, which was everything they wanted in addition to what Arafat had already conceded, which was 78% of what they had in 1948. He also conceded West Jerusalem, which is where I was born and where my family had a house. That was 40% Arab. He gave that all away. The concessions Arafat made were vastly more generous and ill-considered than anything the Israelis did. So quite correctly, I think, he rebelled.

*Another theme echoed by the pundits is the image of Palestin-*

peace camp within the Labor Party has always been that we are going to gain by this. We are going to give up land that's useless. We're going to give up chores that are onerous. Ruling Palestinians. We don't want to do that. Let them do it. We're not going to give up any settlements. Beilin says it all the time. And he is portrayed as the ultimate dove in this country and in Israel. He is always saying, We're not going to give up any of the main settlements. We're going to annex the best land. We're going to keep Jerusalem. You people shouldn't complain, telling the Likud that they had very little reason to object to the arrangements.

It also must be said that Israel signed peace treaties with two Arab countries, Jordan and Egypt, and still twenty years of peace with Egypt have remained essentially cold. The Israelis say, We tried. We sent missions. But the Israelis have to face the consequences of their actions. Israel is seen everywhere as responsible for the use of massive weapons, disproportionate violence against civilians, the continued expropriation of land, the building of settlements, the trampling on Palestinian rights. This has made the Arab world and the Islamic world of three hundred million Arabs, 1.2 billion Muslims, have made of Israel a pariah state which has been laying up for itself a sense of resentment and outrage and hostility that cannot go away given the present policy. That's why I say it's suicidal, because in the end Israel is a state in the Middle East. It's not next to Kansas. It's not part of New York. It's six thousand



miles away. Lebanon is on its northern border. On its eastern border are Syria and Jordan. On its southern border is Egypt. The Palestinians are everywhere inside Israel and on the West Bank and Gaza. You can beat them down, and certainly Israel has the most powerful army. It has a nuclear arsenal of two hundred warheads. It's got the best air force in the region, and one of the two or three best air forces in the world. Of course it has military and economic superiority. It has above all the support of the U.S. But how long can that last? At some point the numbers are going to be against it. I figure that by 2010 there will be an equal number of Palestinians and Israelis on historical Palestine. There will be demographic parity between Jews and Arabs. At which point, how much can the Israelis control? By 2030 there will be twice as many Arabs as there are Jews. So the Jews in Israel will be in a minority.

It's certainly acceptable that they should have political self-determination. But it can't simply be guaranteed by military means. That is not a long-term policy. The only option is peace, and it has to be a real peace between equals as opposed to a peace that it imposed on the weaker party by the stronger one.

***You said the Palestinians living in Israel comprise something like 20% of the population.***

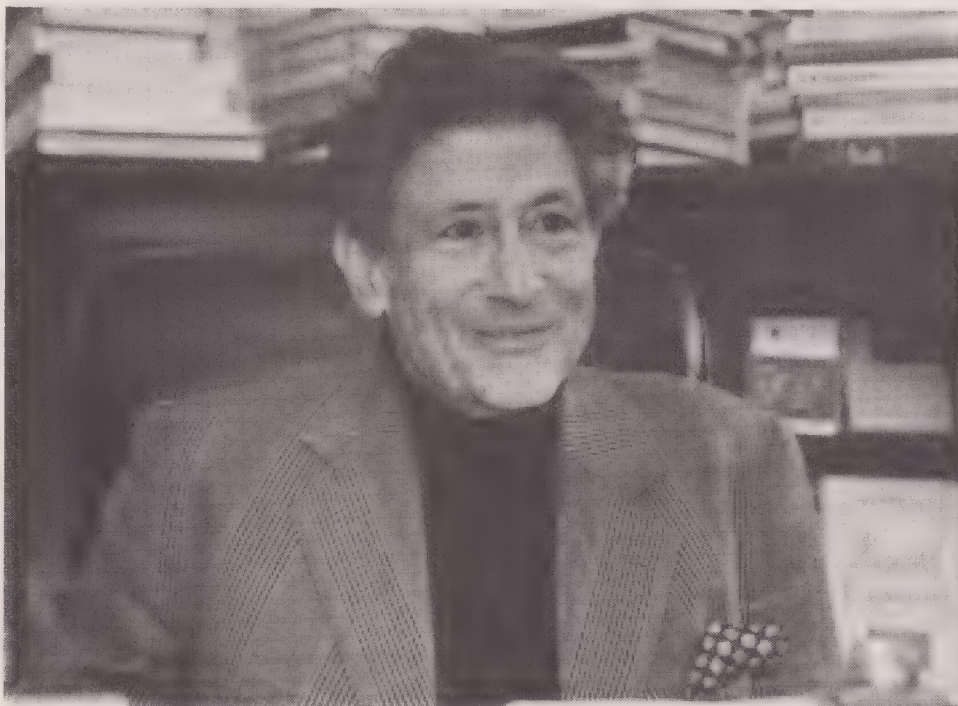
Eighteen percent. Almost a million people.

***In the 1987 uprising they were rather quiescent. However in the 2000 intifada that has dramatically changed. Why?***

One is the treatment of the Palestinian Israelis by the Israeli government has historically been appalling. They were ruled by military edict until 1966. So for eighteen years, from the beginning of the state in 1948, they were an outcast people in their own country. Discriminated against in every conceivable way. They were not allowed to move, to be educated properly, to have certain jobs. In 1966 the military government was lifted and they were given a measure of improved conditions. They were represented in the Knesset. They could vote in elections. They can't serve in the army. They can't own land. During that period, from 1966 on, they had watched the alienation of their land continue to take place. Many of the villages, like Um El Fahm, which was probably the

largest Arab village in Israel, lost 10,000 dunams, about 2,500 acres, of its village land ceded to the Israel government. It was simply expropriated for military purposes. They were going to turn it into a target range. As I mentioned, the budget is so little for them, the schools are definitely much less well-endowed. Electricity and water service in the Arab towns and villages is very poor. So there was a massive sense of being discriminated against for the simple reason that they're not Jews. It's a kind of racism that affected the whole community and they finally rose up against it. They saw what the Israeli army was doing in the West Bank and Gaza and they identified with the Palestinians there. That's the second most important thing. What the Israelis have tried to do has been to destroy the sense of unity of these people, who are divided by geography. The Palestinians of Israel are Israeli citizens and the people in the West Bank and Gaza used to be Jordanians, or in Gaza they used to be Egyptians. They're now in an indeterminate

state. The Palestinians in Jordan and Lebanon are stateless people. One of the most important achievements of the PLO historically was to make the people feel as one people. I think the whole of the policy of the U.S. and Israel has been in the last twenty years to keep digging away at Palestinian identity, to fragment it, so that people didn't feel that they were part of the same entity who have suffered collec-



tively as a people under the Israelis and behind them of course the U.S.

All these calculations turned out to be wrong. There was an immediate sense of identification that the lot of Palestinians under military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza dramatically resembled the lot of Palestinians who were Israeli citizens who were denied the same things and were in fact severely oppressed and handicapped and disadvantaged. They also rose up in demonstrations against the Israelis. What they got was an Israeli military response. They didn't get a political response with the result that fourteen citizens of Israel were killed by the police of Israel.

So there's also a continuity of policy of Israelis towards Palestinians, that they're not to be treated as a people. Back of this policy is an irrational fear of excavating the past because if you allow the past to be looked at frankly and openly, as many of us have been advocating, Israelis and Palestinians, you will see what Israel's original sin is, that it destroyed Palestine in 1948. And that



far from going away, this original sin has been returning in one form after another.

The Israelis have said that we have a right to this land. There was nobody here. In one way or another they've been saying this all along. It doesn't matter what happened in 1948. Let's try to deal with 1967. Those are unacceptable responses in the twenty-first century. It behooves everyone to say, This is simply unacceptable behavior. You can't simply wipe the slate clean to suit you and your policy. You have to face the other party and try to take responsibility for what you did, the way everybody has. The Japanese have taken responsibility for what they did to the Koreans. The Germans for the Jews. The Poles for the Jews. In this the Israelis are not different from these people. What they've done has imposed on another people a calamity which continues to this very day, along with all the denials. No, they weren't here. This was an empty land. God gave it to us. These are just Arabs. They don't count. These arguments are still being used today. Or, basically these are second-class people, barbarians. We are much more developed. That in my opinion is the problem today. It cannot be addressed by the ridiculous peace process imposed by the whims of the U.S. and the Israeli leadership.

***Settlers and Orthodox Israeli Jews have staged demonstrations and protests and thrown rocks at cars and buses. Have there been any instances of Israeli security forces opening fire on them?***

None at all. Let me give you a very dramatic example. The town of Hebron is essentially an Arab town. There were no Jews in it before 1967. After 1967, they've managed to establish by force a colony of somewhere between 300 and 400 Jews inside a town that contains roughly 120,000 or 130,000 Arabs. Those settlers, who constitute roughly .03% of the population, now control 20% of the town by virtue of the peace process. The part of the town that they occupy is right in the middle of the Arab territory, not on the outskirts. So they can walk through the town surrounded by army personnel who protect them and who also provide them with weapons. They are there on a daily, an hourly basis, to demonstrate their rights as Jews in an Arab town to override the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the citizens, who are Arabs. And it's this group that produced Baruch Goldstein, who committed the murder of 29 worshipers in the mosque in Hebron, which is also held by the Israelis. When I visited in 1992, I was astonished. In order to get into the mosque, which also contains a yeshiva, you have to pass through Israeli barricades and metal detectors and a group of soldiers sitting at the door of the mosque with their feet up on the table, which is a very provocative thing in an Islamic context, and their boots stuck in the faces of the worshipers trying to get through. It's through this barricade that Baruch Goldstein passed in February 1994 and opened fire on 29 worshipers. This is the current situation multiplied hundreds of times in the West Bank and Gaza, where the settlers are rampaging vigilantes. Settlements are built next to Arab towns. They have arms. They are protected by the soldiers. They also are soldiers themselves. Goldstein was a member of the Israeli military reserve. They go out and prey on these Arab villages and terrorize them. They break their windows, burn their cars, destroy their crops. The settlers are a tremendous provocation. The problem is that they've been increasing under Barak, who came to power in July 1999. He in-

creased the number of acres more than they did under Netanyahu and certainly more than under Peres and Rabin. So the settlement problem is a real one because it means taking land away and adding intrusive, illegal Israeli nationals to what is in effect a Palestinian territory, making it harder, this is one of the basic flaws of the peace process, that while it's going forward and the Palestinians are signing away, the Israelis are making it harder for there to be a viable Palestinian state. They are in all the territories. They control the Jordan Valley. So that there will be no border between a Palestinian state and any other Arab state. All the borders will be controlled by the Israelis through settlements and military outposts.

***You wrote a series of three articles in Al-Ahram Weekly entitled "American Zionism." In the lead article you discuss an interview you had with Avi Shavit of Ha'aretz, the main Israeli newspaper. You drew certain conclusions from that interaction.***

The distinction I was trying to draw was that the Israel position is that the Palestinians are there, but they are a lesser people. The right wing says we conquered them and they have to be our servants. The left wing says we can rearrange them in some inoffensive way. Today because the Israelis live there and they see Palestinians every minute of the day, as their servants and waiters in the restaurants of Tel Aviv or their chauffeurs and taxi drivers, all those people who work in the occupied territories and in Jerusalem, they know they're there as a physical presence. So that's the Israeli Zionist awareness, consciousness of Palestinians. The American Zionist by contrast really doesn't think of the Palestinians as a real thing at all. There's a kind of fantasy element in which Palestinians are a gratuitous ideological fiction created to harass the Israelis and therefore avatars of anti-Semitism. That's what Bernard Lewis keeps saying all the time, this is Arab anti-Semitism. Detaching the Palestinians from their history, from the fact that they were supplanted and their society destroyed in 1948 and have been under military occupation since 1967. American Zionism is much more dangerous than Israeli Zionism. It's based on a fantasy, that the Palestinians are really not there at all and can be treated as microbes in some way or at best as an ideological fiction.

***The interview was given a prominent place.***

It appeared on the front page of Ha'aretz, in the Friday supplement. Obviously Shavit's views and mine are quite different, but at least he was willing to listen to me. This interview could never have appeared in an American newspaper. They would never have dared to run such a thing. Simply because the whole subject of Palestine is virtually forbidden in the U.S. and can only be treated as a subsidiary of a subsidiary of a subsidiary and is the principle upon which many of the Jewish organizations function.

***A couple of years ago you made a documentary film for the BBC called In Search of Palestine. After being shown on BBC2 and then on BBC World, it has more or less disappeared. The BBC was almost totally unsuccessful in getting it on U.S. television. Why was that?***

There's a history of films from a Palestinian point of view in this



country. There's an organized response from the Zionist organizations to try to stop it, try to block it. They try to argue it down. They try to make sure that the advertisers or the show if it's on television pay a very heavy price for it in withdrawn support. If they want to show one Palestinian film they have to show five films from the Israeli point of view. What happened to my film was very much of that order. Nobody would take it. The BBC couldn't place it in this country. Finally, through personal connections, I was able to get it on Channel 13 in New York, PBS, to show it once, and I think it was shown on public television in San Francisco, also once. Effectively the film has disappeared. The notion is that the representation of Palestinians as human beings with a history and a cause, is simply forbidden. As an example, during the last six weeks of the Al-Aqsa intifada that began in late September until now, the New York Times on its op-ed page has simply not run any pro-Palestinian articles except one by an Israeli who argued the Palestinian case. Not a single Arab, with the exception of one, by a Jordanian, and we're talking maybe fifty op-ed pieces, maybe more, saying that he supported the peace process, saying this was a pity, let's go back to Oslo, and a very strong article by an Israeli lawyer, a woman who's in this country. The rest have all been pro-Israeli. That's been true of the Washington Post, of all the major papers. In all the reporting no maps have been shown, so you can't really tell what the Palestinians have lost and where they are confined, in little bantustans in the West Bank and Gaza. The net result is that the picture of Palestine and Palestinians that circulates in the popular consciousness is very limited. Mercifully, there are alternative sources. You're obviously one yourself. The Internet brings extracts from the Israeli press, the British press, the Arab press, from independent and alternative journalists writing all over the world. These are available in cyberspace. But the overwhelming official consensus is that Israel is a besieged, victimized country. The Arabs will not accept it because they are anti-Semitic. It should also be said that the Arab world itself is in a very bad state. All of the rulers without exception are tyrannical and anti-democratic. There is no democracy. The Arabs are paying the heaviest price for this. It's not being paid for by the U.S. It's being paid for by Arabs, whose general situation, whether health or education or general income levels or infrastructure or transportation or environment, has steadily decreased in the last few years, nowhere more precipitously than in the years since the peace process began in the early 1990s. So I think that explains why Palestine has become a kind of touchstone for Arab opinion everywhere. It represents the injustice of the ruler towards the ruled, whether it's Israelis or Palestinians or whether it's Palestinians ruling Palestinians, using the Palestinian Authority against Palestinian citizens occupied by Israel or in Morocco or Egypt people rebelling against the unjust authority and the delegitimized regimes, all of which are supported by the U.S. So it's not surprising that what we have is I think a major turning point in the history

of the modern Middle East.

***What can be done to reverse what you call the unhealthy quality to public discourse in the Arab world?***

One has to begin first by mobilizing the community of supporters in this country of which there are many for the rights of the Palestinians and the genuine course toward peace and reconciliation between Palestinians, Arabs generally, and Israelis. So we need to mobilize opinion here. We must have more pressure, because the polls that I've seen since the early 1970s all have shown that American popular consensus is way ahead of official policy. The role of the political action committees and the Israeli lobby and the media have been inordinately reductionist and have taken positions far in arrears to that of most Americans, who when given a quarter of a chance will see the justice and the injustice of the situation. So I think the constant monitoring of the media, as some are beginning to do all over the country, to show the imbalances is important. NPR and the TV networks and newspapers, like the

New York Times, should be constantly bombarded with alternatives and letters and organized campaigns to change their coverage. Second, I think the most important thing is to delegitimize the Israeli military occupation. It has gone on for thirty-three years. Just as the anti-apartheid activism in this country made it impossible for apartheid to function by organizing on a mass basis. Israel is the largest recipient of foreign aid in the history of this country. There is an constant exchange between American academics and Israeli universities. I myself have urged people who go to Israel invited by one or another university to make a point to go to Palestinian universities. We have to do this work ourselves, to include the larger community of academics, writers, artisans, intellec-

**The U.S. sells 40% of its entire arms outlay to the Middle East, whether it's the Gulf countries or Israel. They're the largest purchasers of arms in the world. What we have to do is to take the curtain away so that the debate about the Middle East is not hobbled by the fear of inciting the Zionist lobby. Just because the New Republic or Commentary take after somebody doesn't mean that they should stop. One shouldn't be afraid of what is a paper tiger. They have very thin support. They're more noisy than they are right in what they do.**

tuals, peace activists, anti-imperialists, anti-discrimination activists, of whom there are many in this country. The civil rights movement. The antiwar movement. The women's movement. To engage in this and see that it's part of a common struggle, the struggle for the improvement of the environment. The U.S. sells 40% of its entire arms outlay to the Middle East, whether it's the Gulf countries or Israel. They're the largest purchasers of arms in the world. What we have to do is to take the curtain away so that the debate about the Middle East is not hobbled by the fear of inciting the Zionist lobby. Just because the New Republic or Commentary take after somebody doesn't mean that they should stop. One shouldn't be afraid of what is a paper tiger. They have very thin support. They're more noisy than they are right in what they do.

I think it's a challenge that's meetable if young people are mobilized and have a critical awareness of what's going on. There's no excuse for not knowing.

***There's been a lot of media focus on Palestinian sectarian formations such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad. What's going on in***



There's been a widening gap between the rich and the poor in Middle East society. Globalization, with its transformation of economies into vast consumer markets for venture capitalism, has made things worse. There are small isolated sectors connected to the regimes that are enriching themselves. The vast mass of people live in poverty with threats of eviction, the inability to find jobs, to feed their children and send them to school. I think it's wrong to see the Islamic organizations simply as terrorist formations. They certainly have provided a civic alternative to the governments, which are all, without exception, corrupt. Their budgets have been given up to enormous schemes. The Palestinian budget, for example, has 2% for the infrastructure, 60% for the bureaucracy. That's the kind of lopsided distortions you have. People go to the mosques and the religious schools for the kind of sustenance they can't get elsewhere. Militarily, the militants of Hamas and Islamic Jihad have really been unsuccessful. They've also demonstrated that they don't really have a message beyond the kind of sustenance I was talking about. In other words, for the last twenty years, since the emergence of Hamas, but this is also true of the Moslem Brothers in Egypt and the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria, the message is not getting through to the people, simply because they don't have a message about the future. You can't simply say Islam is the only solution. You have to deal with problems of electricity, water, the environment, of transportation. Those can't be Islamic. So they've failed on that level. I think it's a complex formation that suggests that secularism is the dominant force. Islam remains the last cultural bastion to defend against the intrusions and the aggressions on the Arab Muslim by Israel and the U.S. and the regimes. So I would say it's a symbol of resistance rather than something that can immediately be translated into a political message or a political vision for the future. It isn't. That has to come from citizens who think in terms of coexistence, of cooperation, of, let's say in the Arab world, a common Arab market, a common pooling of Arab resources, a common policy on immigration and integration of a kind, alas, that hasn't been the case for at least two generations.

***In light of the 2000 intifada, what does that mean for your proposal of a couple of years ago for a binational state where Palestinians and Israelis would live in one country?***

I think now the preeminent thing is the end of military occupation. The realities on the ground in fact bear out what I've been saying. The Palestinians and the Israelis are so integrated, the territory is so small that you can't have a situation in which one population has imposed itself militarily upon another. I'm very much against evictions and driving people off. This is what happened to us. I do think, however, that the settlements have to be dismantled and the populations have to face each other as not only neighbors but in fact in coexistence, in one basically homogenous state which we call historical Palestine, whether you call it Israel or a Palestinian state. The economies and the histories are so intertwined that I still think that in the end a binational state is the only long-term solution. I suppose in the interim, as a kind of transition, one would have to have two states in which one is free of military occupation and then is able out of that freedom to pursue policies

that integrate it not just with Israel but with Jordan, Lebanon, the other small countries that make up this very densely populated and highly integrated part of the world. The point is that partition, separation, has not worked. It has always meant that one side of the partition is disadvantaged and the other is the outsider and more powerful. This produces more problems. Since the 1940s, when most of the Arab states got their independence and Israel was created, the problems have multiplied. They haven't gone away. Coexistence behind barbed wire, behind suspicion and violence, state violence of the kind that Israel wages and the kind that the Syrian regime has waged for example, and the Iraqi regime has waged, simply doesn't produce the kind of stability and peaceful coexistence that everyone desires. I still think it's the optimal solution and will come. But alas, a lot of time has to pass and some of these tremendous vestiges of the past have to be worked through.

***How are you doing?***

I'm OK. I have a chronic illness which can't be cured but can be held at bay. Periodically I have to have treatment. One loses as one ages somewhat, but the idea is to keep going.

***It's a rather ironic situation in terms of your health that you're treated at Long Island Jewish Hospital by an eminent Indian doctor who is surrounded by Irish nurses.***

And an American Indian assistant. And I'm a Palestinian patient. It's lovely. I feel like a privileged person. I consider myself the longest serving inmate of that particular institution, having been in treatment for seven or eight years. They are very kind to me. I love being in their hands. I don't like being there. I wish I wasn't. But if one has to be there, that's a very good place to be.

***So unlike the title of your memoir, *Out of Place*, do you feel a bit at ease?***

No, I still feel out of place, but there are degrees of out of placeness, and this is, considering the contradiction of living in New York, a very tolerable one.

***What books do you have coming up?***

I have a large collection of essays called *Reflections on Exile*, which is about to appear. Harvard is publishing it. Then I have a book of interviews called *Culture, Politics and Power*, which Pantheon is bringing out next Fall. Then I have two small books, one on opera and one on humanism. They are both based on lectures. The opera book is based on talks I gave at Cambridge. The one on humanism is from lectures I gave at Columbia.

***Do you have time to pursue your avocation of music?***

I'm doing a book of conversations with my friend, the pianist and conductor Daniel Barenboim. It will be completed by the end of this year. As much as I can, I play piano and chamber music with friends.







# Group Sex: Communal Ethics of Eroticism, Free Love, and the Extended Family

By Andy "Sunfrog" Smith

In "Group Sex: Communal Ethics of Eroticism, Free Love and the Extended Family" Andy "sunfrog" Smith examines the history and philosophy of the 'free love' movement. Since his 1991 review/essay "Operation Gender Blur," Sunfrog has written extensively about radical sexuality for the *Fifth Estate*. This essay has been reprinted from the Fall/Winter 2000-2001 (Vol. 35 #2) issue of *Fifth Estate*. *Fifth Estate* is an anti-technology, anti-civilization, anarcho-primitivist tabloid that has been publishing for well over three decades since its start as an underground newspaper in the 1960s. A four-issue subscription is \$10 from 4632 Second Avenue., Detroit, MI 48201.

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• "Free love? As if love is anything but free!" – Emma Goldman,  
• "Marriage and Love," *The Traffic in Women*

• "Most plans for creating a more just society focus on ameliorating human misery. They address unemployment, hunger, illiteracy, class-based inequity, unequal access to medical care, pollution, overpopulation, and discrimination based on sex, race, age, or membership in other devalued groups. While I care about all of those problems, I also wonder why so many of the proposed solutions make me shudder with dread. Perhaps it is because people who take on such enormous political chores are usually suffering from burnout. There is no room in their brave new worlds for fun, creativity, ornamentation, play and desire. I am skeptical of utopian schemes that don't take into account the human need for adventure." – Pat Califia, "Sluts in Utopia: The Future of Radical Sex," *Public Sex*

• **I**s free love a relic of the past? Does principled promiscuity still persist at the dawn of the twenty-first century? Where do anti-authoritarian radicals stand in the cultural combat that would like to see erotic experiments relegated to a debased subculture, viewed on a talk show, banned from the Internet, or devoured by a religious holy war?



Despite the demonization of deviance and AIDS-era erotophobia, free love experiments continued to flourish throughout 1990s and show no signs of demise as we begin a new century. The latest wave in the free love movement is often organized around the concept of "Poly," for polyamory and polysexual.

Polyamory refers to the philosophy and practice of loving more than one person simultaneously. Etymologically, the word polyamory suggests "many loves" and has recently become an umbrella term for a variety of alternative relationship models that share an ethic of compassion, integrity, and complete honesty to combat the negative social stigma associated with words like cheating, swinging, and promiscuity. Polysexual, almost a synonym for utopian bisexual, the term describes a person with an inclusive sexual orientation that embraces not only loving people of both genders but having an erotic relationship with the entire universe and life itself.

Today, polyamory and polysexuality attract many younger iconoclasts informed by several diverse cultural influences-including anarchism, punk rock, bisexuality, neo-tribal dance music, modern primitivism, safer-sex, paganism, Radical Faeries, Queer Nation, and sex-positive feminist writers, such as Annie Sprinkle, Susie Bright, Pat Califia, and Carol Queen. Alternatives to monogamy have a vast history in the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and queer communities where, until only recently, exclusive monogamous relationships were an aberration rather than the norm.

Contemporary polyamory emerges in a variety of arrangements including committed foursomes and triads, group marriages and erotic affinity groups, orgies or safer sex play parties, one-night stands, flings, affairs, and festive flirtations. However, the most common form of polyamory is the non-exclusive primary relationship that honors the need for healthy and honest sexual liaisons with other people without threatening or undermining the relationship with the primary partner. When parameters of safety and consent are clearly negotiated, casual sex can be genuinely liberating.

However, free love did not begin with the counterculture of the 1960s or 1990s. Historians and anthropologists have shown that archaic models for what we call "alternative lifestyles" today exist cross-culturally and throughout history. In *On the Prehistory of Marriage*, Josef Kohler constructs an anthropological argument for the prevalence of "community in marriage" or "totemistic group marriage" in a variety of primitive cultures.

In *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture*, Arthur Evans expands Kohler's ideas about sexual variety among primitive peoples as he describes orgies and sex worship in Africa, America, and other parts of the premodern world. About these ecstatic rituals, Evans writes, "Their orgies were acts of sexual worship to the power of sex [primitive peoples] felt in themselves and in nature around them. Nature people did, indeed, believe that through such acts their bodies would become stronger, the crops would grow taller, the sun would shine brighter, and the rains would come in profusion when needed. But they believed these things because they had a collective tribal feeling of the power of sex throbbing through the whole of nature; their experience of sex was so open, public, communal and intense that they felt it rever-

berate through the whole cosmos."

Additionally, Evans traces the historical roots of sexual liberation to early European paganism and nature worship, contrasting uninhibited, orgiastic rites with our modern condition of "alienation from nature, sexual repression, self-denial, and obedience." Throughout his book, Evans convincingly suggests that economic injustice and exploitation of nature cannot be divorced from the wholesale denial of the body that is the cornerstone of normative Christian and capitalist values.

### Hippie" era Orgies

In America, the roots of contemporary erotic experiments can also be traced to nineteenth-century utopian communities. Free love also continued to exist in bohemian enclaves throughout the twentieth century. Many factors contributed to the well-known reputations of "hippie"-era orgies and open relationships in the late 1960s and early 1970s, distinguishing this period of erotic experimentation from previous examples. "Second wave" feminism, Stonewall-era gay liberation, the widespread availability of birth control, media attention focused on the counterculture, and the rise of sympathetic scholarly investigation into radical movements all contributed to widening celebrations and condemnations of free love. For participants, free love was an emblem for the convergence of the public and private, political and personal, social and spiritual.

Collective gestures towards erotic freedom and experimental relationships offer a profound counter-tradition to the prevalent puritan and ascetic ethic in American history. By studying the history and philosophy of free love and exploring both the limits and possibilities it offers for contemporary radicals's seeking free relationships beyond the constricts of romantic capitalism, we can hopefully renew our confidence in the power of love to challenge social conventions and help create more pleasurable lives.

### The Nuclear Family, Authoritarian Ideology, and Expansive Alternatives

To understand the modern critique of marriage and the nuclear family, many radical thinkers point to the insights pioneered in the 1930s by renegade psychiatrist Wilhelm Reich. In *The Sexual Revolution*, Reich charges that "the patriarchal family is the structural and ideological place of reproduction of every social order based on authoritarian principles."

Rather than celebrate marriage as a natural outgrowth of love between two people, Reich asserts that any marginally redemptive features of modern marriage are consumed by the need to perpetuate the existing economic, political, and social order; thus, marriage and the family become mere "ideological training ground[s] for every member of authoritarian society." For Reich, a social revolution must be a sexual revolution, and the affirmation of life must begin with an affirmation of erotic pleasure.

From this critical rejection of conventional monogamous marriage and the patriarchal nuclear family, radical activists in the late 1960s and the early 1970s attempted to incorporate a Reichian ethic of sexual affirmation into social and sexual alter-



natives that included committed communes and group marriages along with ecstatic orgies and casual swinging.

The manner in which we define family as a culture continues to be a loaded and controversial topic. Living with other people and raising healthy children are stressful and energy-consuming endeavors in both traditional and nontraditional families, in suburban apartments or at rural communes. In the *Ecotopian Encyclopedia*, Ernest Callenbach contends, "In the long sweep of human history, the nuclear family will probably be seen as a very brief aberration, brought about by the special needs of industrial capitalism and the isolated suburban living made possible by cars, but insufficient for nurturing and supporting human beings. In [communes and extended families] we will approximate the ancient groupings our species has relied on for survival: small bands whose variety of strengths and talents give great resilience against outside threats, and whose interior psychological life is rich and complicated enough to challenge its members' developmental potentials."

Today, a Reichian analysis of the coercion inherent in the patriarchal, heterosexual, nuclear family has lost some ground: leading gay rights activists have ceased calling for a Whitmanesque "army of lovers" and are begging politicians for the right to imitate heterosexual marriage; a few feminists have joined the religious right in a legislative war against sexual freedom and the First Amendment; self pronouncements about the sanctity of the traditional family flood the culture as our religious and political leaders cling to rigid notions of kinship. Nonetheless, common alternatives to life-long heterosexual marriages continue to abound, ranging from serial monogamy to single-parent households to unmarried cohabitation. Furthermore, a variety of libertarian models for extended families and erotic affinity groups that involve networks of lovers and their children, although a minority, refuse to go away.

### **Feminism and free love**

American sex-radicals from the nineteenth-century to the present frequently include feminist ideals in their advocacy of erotic liberation. For many nineteenth-century activists, free love was synonymous with a feminist critique of marriage as a legal manifestation of gender oppression and male supremacy. In *Free Love in America*, Taylor Stoehr observes that "[w]omen in particular stood to gain" from the abolition of marriage and the flowering of alternatives; according to Stoehr, "every militant free lover" of the nineteenth century "was also a feminist."

Emma Goldman's vigorous exhortations in "Marriage and

Love" typify the radical dismissal of marriage desired by many late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century feminists: She wrote: "The institution of marriage makes a parasite of woman, an absolute dependent. It incapacitates her for life's struggle, annihilates her social consciousness, paralyzes her imagination, and then imposes its gracious protection, which is in reality a snare." Anarchist, free love advocates at the nineteenth-century utopian colony Modern Times, like Goldman, focused their rhetoric on a critique of marriage. Modern Times's most adamant admonishment of marriage came from a married couple, Mary and Thomas Nichols. In their eloquent attack on erotic restraint, the Nicholsons charge: "A true marriage may be what the laws call adultery while the real adultery is an unloving marriage. [Nature gave men and women] the power, and consequently the right, to love more than one person at the same time and to have and enjoy a succession and a variety of passions. Of that system of superstition, bigotry, oppression, and

plunder, which we call civilization, the monogamic, indissoluble marriage is the center and the soul. If marriage is false it must be destroyed; and the social system that rests upon falsehood, must be false, as every one sees and feels society to be—false and rotten to its heart's core. Let it be destroyed; the sooner, the better. The society we want is men and women living in freedom and governed by their attractions."

A century later, however, when free love was born again in the counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s, the desire for sexual freedom did not always acknowledge the need for sexual equality. During this period, free love no longer signified an explicit feminist critique of marriage as

much as it heralded an invocation of and invitation to indulgence in primordial impulses and intense pleasures with a variety of partners. If the practice of erotic openness does not include clear negotiation, consent, and an explicit critique of male-female power relationships in a sexist society, free love can further victimize rather than liberate women.

However, this is not a failure of the philosophy of free love as much as it is a testimonial to the fact that widespread socialization into traditional gender roles and puritanical sexual repression cannot be entirely overcome without radically restructuring society. An overt refusal or unintentional inability by both men and women to maintain the historical connection between free love and feminism during the sexual revolution may be responsible, in part, for the feminist backlash against sexual freedom that took hold in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Addressing this backlash in "Among Us, Against Us: Right Wing Feminism" in her book, *Public Sex*, Pat Califia chronicles the propaganda and political goals of the feminist anti-pornogra-

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phy movement spearheaded by Andrea Dworkin and Catherine MacKinnon. While Dworkin and MacKinnon focus their crusades on a particular issue, their rhetoric typifies all-encompassing erotophobic values that gained popularity among feminists during the Reagan years.

Califa's vigorous criticism attacks this new feminist morality on many fronts, but most importantly, she insists that anti-sex feminism is reactionary and counterrevolutionary because it reinscribes a Victorian ideal that "women need to be protected from sex" to avoid "being degraded and victimized by out-of-control men" and it lends itself to co-optation by "powerful segments of our society to create a sex-negative climate that will facilitate the suppression of all forms of sexual dissent."

Far from a problem with the philosophy of feminism and gender equality, the new prudery is merely an odd manifestation of patriarchal repression clothed in feminist rhetoric. And, far from condemning the free consensual choices of any woman, sex-radical feminists merely seek to honor free erotic desire as part of their social liberation without the threat of legal and moral persecution from politicians, preachers, and, unfortunately, some feminists.

As contemporary sex-positive feminists reclaim feminism and desire from the dire Puritanism of the new Victorians and erotophobic sex police, the utopian voices of a small yet eclectic, eccentric, and egalitarian free love movement remain vibrant, promising a panoply of possible alternatives for people of all genders and sexual orientations.

### **The Erotic Universe: Sacred Sex & Polysexuality**

By looking briefly at some historical examples, we can see how the idea of free love was tested in large, idealistic, communal utopias. These historical examples demonstrate the need for freedom, flexibility, and forgiveness in the practice of free love more than the desirability of one model over another.

This segment of my research revolves around the historical literature about four distinct communal experiments: Oneida, founded by John Humphery Noyes in New York state in 1848; Kerista, founded in 1971 in San Francisco; Modern Times, founded by Stephen Pearl Andrews and Josiah Warren in 1851 in what is now Brentwood, New Jersey; and, Home, founded by three families on Puget Sound in Washington state in 1896. These four groups can be separated into two distinct models for free love in community.

Oneida and Kerista attempted to implement clearly organized, complex systems for love in utopia while Modern Times

and Home promoted free love as an ideal without institutionalizing it as a practice. Although each of these groups deserves much further attention, this cursory survey should illustrate some important points about the practice of free love in a communal setting.

Both the Oneidans and Keristans attempted to implement a structured context for multi-partner relationships, practiced group therapy techniques of mutual criticism for maintaining a common identity and social control, followed an outspoken leader, and pooled labor and resources communally. At Modern Times as well as at Home, members tempered the communal urge with a strong libertarian spirit, worked independently in a variety of fields, vigorously published radical theories, and lived, as much as possible, according to their individual desires. While both Modern Times and Home clearly had founders and outspoken members, both groups espoused anarchist ideals and neither community expected its members to conform to the wishes of a leader or the ideology of the entire group.

Because unconventional, erotic arrangements were part of

the official program, we can learn more about the actual sexual practices at Oneida and Kerista. For the anarchists, free love constituted a theory intended to emancipate women from the patriarchy and liberate lovers from the dictates of the state. While I imagine that some of these anarchist colonists led animated and light-hearted love lives that would startle even con-

temporary sensibilities, the literature on Home and Modern Times down plays the actual love part of free love. Just as the available sources avoid any prurient details about Modern Times and Home, many contemporary anarchist collectives practice polyamory without betraying their own privacy by publicly proselytizing for it.

John Humphery Noyes's nineteenth-century, communal outpost at Oneida, New York prospered for thirty years and is probably the most widely researched and discussed attempt at practicing free love in a utopian context. Inspired by the biblical notion that in heaven disciples "neither marry nor are given in marriage," Oneidans advocated and attempted a form of Christian free love they labeled complex marriage, pioneered birth control with the practice of male continence (sexual intercourse without ejaculation, also known as coitus reservatus).

### **Innovative Sexual Practices**

While the Oneidans firmly rejected claims they were irresponsible, hedonistic, or perverse, they clearly and radically experimented with sexuality as men accepted responsibility for birth control and women acknowledged orgasms a hundred years be-



fore the so-called sexual revolution. With successful business endeavors, a sophisticated communal culture, innovative sexual practices, and an extended family identity, the community collectively articulated what Lawrence Foster calls Noyes' "millenarian expectation that the ideal patterns of the kingdom of heaven could literally be realized on earth."

Despite Oneida's utopian achievements, complex marriage and communal solidarity could not extend beyond the enchanted vision of the founder. In 1879, two years after Noyes gave up his leadership role, the Oneidans abandoned complex marriage. In 1881, the community dissolved and reformed as a joint-stock company.

Discontent with the strict structure of sexual relations in the community took many forms. Because participation in complex marriage was required of all adult members, because young adults could not choose their first sexual partners but were initiated by older members of the community, because the community leadership decided who could and could not have children, free love at Oneida was not particularly free. Beyond their obvious faults, Noyes and the Oneidans impressed American reformers with the importance of a communal economy and the practice of erotic camaraderie.

Almost a century after the collapse of Oneida's complex marriage, a handful of hip dreamers attempted to reinvent group marriage without jealousy at Kerista, an urban commune in San Francisco. Despite infectious utopian idealism and a successful community computer business, Kerista's elaborate social contract and cult of personality (surrounding the group's unofficial leader) ultimately created an intolerable social climate for the members.

In "A Tale of Two Communes: A Scholar and His Errors," Michael Cummings offers a critical yet balanced assessment of Kerista's creative response to the limits of monogamy and final failure to practice polyfidelity in the context of a feminist, egalitarian commune. As in many utopian schemes, the Keristans' "ambitious visions" proved difficult to sustain in everyday practice.

However, Cummings and former Keristans agree that the commune's demise did not result from too much freedom in terms of sexual practices, but from a lack of freedom in the communal structure. Cummings believes that polyfidelity provided the Keristans with "a high level of personal gratification and free-

dom from sexual tension."

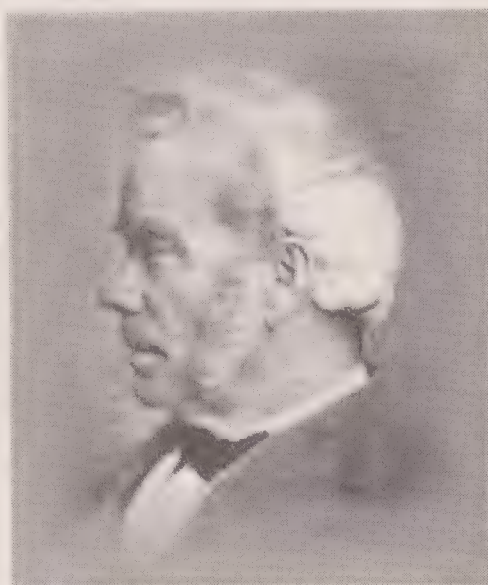
### "Delicious Sexual Variety"

In "The Dark Side of Community," former member Michael Slomiak recalls "the love, delicious sexual variety, intellectual dynamism, humor, and vision." Similarly, founding Keristan Eve Furchgott remembers "a real sense of belonging to a tribe." Nevertheless, Slomiak, Furchgott, and other survivors of the Kerista experiment express profound disillusionment with the communal dynamic and the authoritarian power trips of Kerista's quasi-guru, "Brother Jud."

In the end, a strong leader and elements of social control severed the tribal bonds and overshadowed the liberating aspects of polyamory. One shortcoming with highly-structured group marriages and erotic communes is the failure to acknowledge more

fully the inherently unstructured impulses of human desire. While free love can liberate people from the limits of monogamy, the legacy of Oneida and Kerista shows that authoritarian enforcement of free love in a utopian commune can be as repressive as an unhealthy marriage in the mainstream world.

In contrast, the history of



Modern Times was founded by Stephen Pearl Andrews and Josiah Warren in 1851

Modern Times and Home gives a dramatically different picture of free love in America. The secular, nineteenth-century anarchist movement for free love crystallized at Modern Times. These American free-lovers drank liberally from the eccentric brew of utopian philosophy proposed by French philosopher Charles Fourier. While the first American Fourierists watered down this extraordinary thinker's wilder notions of passionate attraction in favor of his attractive socialism, the anarchists significantly modified the socialism while embracing free love as part of their insistence on individualist ideals. Indeed, Fourier's fantastic speculations sparkle with images of intoxication, festivity, and delight in a passionate new world where, according to twentieth-century Fourierist Peter Lamborn Wilson, "Everything is erotic" and "the only possible society is one composed entirely of lovers."

In "Modern Times and the Emergence of Free Love," John Spurlock emphasizes "Modern Time's tolerance for strange and dangerous ideas" as the factor that made the community a "congenial birthplace for free love" as it "attracted radicals who were



suspicious of all institutions." The vibrant collection of nonconformists who converged at Modern Times included several outspoken opponents of conventional marriage such as writer Marx Edgeworth Lazarus and founder Stephen Pearl Andrews. Upon leaving Modern Times, one short-term resident charged that, "Wife with them is synonymous with slave, and monogamy is denounced as a vicious monopoly of affection."

Similar to Modern Times and founded as a vibrant response to conventional moralities and strictly organized communities, settlers at the Home colony resisted any formal organization beyond the association that kept the land in common.

In "Anarchist Utopianism in the Progressive Era," Detroit-based social historian and Fifth Estate contributor Francis Shor describes Home as a "haven for nonconformists" and observes that "colonists advocated free sexual liberation, nudity, communal landholding, and radical politics which, in turn, challenged the dominant norms and values of their neighbors and the wider society."

Home's critics in the local media of the time painted a sensational picture of "filthy dreamers" and anarchist "perverts." However, the colonists frequently earned and celebrated their radical reputation. In "Home: Nest of Anarchy or Haven of Individualism," Charles LeWarne notes that the community attracted a diverse collection of people including ones who lived in wigwams and tree stumps, lectured on everything from classical history to herbology to astrology, housed fugitives, played music, cross-dressed, discussed philosophy, studied in an extensive library, educated children without rules, ate vegetarian food, and published widely-read journals of anarchist dissent.

Radical luminaries like Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman visited Home along with many lesser known labor organizers and radical writers. While, Goldman lectured at Home and visited friends there at least twice, she was rumored to have criticized the community—like so many twentieth-century, political activists have criticized "hippie" communes—because "the people seemed more interested in vegetables and chickens than in propaganda."

According to LeWarne, Home's notion of free love "was based on the belief that neither state nor church had a right to control the family or sexual relations." While LeWarne dismisses the possibility of "licentiousness" at Home, a lively controversy concerning communal sexual ethics emerged around the practice of nude bathing. When some Home residents were arrested for swimming naked, the local community divided its support for and against nudity and the prosecuted communards. Radical editor Jay Fox added fuel to the fire with an outspoken rant entitled, "The Nudes and the Prudes" that appeared in *The Agitator*, a Home-based radical journal. Fox writes:

"Clothing was made to protect the body, not to hide it. [Home had always been] a community of free spirits, who came out into the woods to escape the polluted atmosphere of priest-ridden conventional society. One of the liberties enjoyed by the Homeites was the privilege to bathe in evening dress, or with merely the clothes nature gave them, just as they chose."

Fox's exhortations exhibit the uncompromising ethic of freedom that defines anarchist communes today as well as those more than a hundred years ago. Although we can only speculate about the specific relational styles that people at Home enjoyed because the historical literature does not deal with this, it is doubtful that a colony with such fiercely libertarian ideals would frown upon any manifestation of erotic multiplicity.

As at Modern Times, residents of Home lived in private dwellings and pursued individual livelihoods. They sought to survive without laws and practice voluntary cooperation. In sharp contrast to the communal economies and complex marriages of Oneida and Kerista, members of these anarchist, free-love societies practiced cultural radicalism without a messianic leader, a constricting social contract, or any singular, ideological doctrine

beyond total freedom. Founding Home member Oliver Verity described their philosophy as "the personal liberty to follow their own line of action no matter how much it may differ from the customs of the past or present, without censure or ostracism from their neighbor."

#### **Free love and the polysexual future**

The 1980s and 90s saw reactionary political and religious leaders mount a bitter moral backlash against erotic alternatives. Harsh penalties have been levied on lesbian, gay, bisexual,

and polyamorous parents who, in some tragic cases, lost custody of their children because the government believes it can decide that being legally separated from one's mother or father is better for a child than learning that humans can love one another in a variety of ways. While a vocal queer, polysexual, and polyamorous contingent exists within the communal movement, we have had to defend vigorously our choices against moralistic suspicion and condemnation from disapproving families, invasive social workers, and in some cases, self-righteous communarians.

Today, the commune that exists as an enclave of erotic freedom usually invokes values of diversity and tolerance without official collective pronouncements to promote a doctrine of sex radicalism, even though many believe that complete erotic liberation can be an honest and ethical choice for living a freer and fuller life. We remain hesitant to challenge anyone's prerogative to choose a monogamous, heterosexual lifestyle after living a life riddled with repression for the choices we make.

Beyond Reichian notions that postulate sexual repression,

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private property, and the patriarchal nuclear family as fundamental sources of misery and alienation in the modern world, I frequently return to inspired revelations of free love's liberating potential. Truly, the intangible and ineffable power of love itself is what makes polyamory possible. The words of Emma Goldman remind us that love is "the strongest and deepest element in all life, the harbinger of hope, of joy, of ecstasy, the defier of all laws, of all conventions . . ."

Inheriting the radical legacy of free love, contemporary polyamorists reject the fairy-tale concept of the "one, true soul-mate" inscribed both by conservative religion and commodity culture's manufactured images of heterosupremacy and coupleism so pathetically apparent in such cultural artifacts as the pop song, the date movie, and the romance novel. The notion that all of our intimate needs can be met exclusively by one person is a myth that needs to be questioned by the entire culture, even if

some people choose not to act on their desires to love more than one person. Humans possess a variety of physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual needs and desires most adequately satisfied by a variety of people in a variety of ways.

Also, expanding definitions of intimacy should by no means be limited to sexual expression. Like the erotic utopians who precede me, our sexually experimental gestures comprise part of creating a new culture.

Ultimately, love provides its own justification. Just as some communes and group marriages fail, others reappear. Whatever the future holds for free lovers, unconditional love and unwavering optimism shape my vision of an amorous and autonomous society. So, with my merry pranksters of passion, we dance into the polysexual future with enthusiasm, experience, and expanding visions of a voluptuous life, challenging conformity and celebrating diversity.





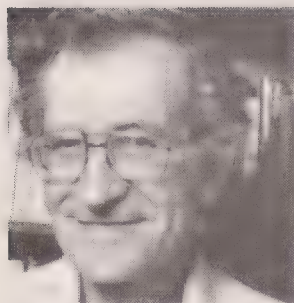


Richard Mock



# PLAN COLOMBIA

By Noam Chomsky



*"Plan Colombia" provides an extensive analysis of U.S. economic and military interests and their role in supporting and rationalizing a "drug war" that has nothing to do with*

*stopping drugs. Noam Chomsky is a well-known professor of linguistics, a prolific author and a staunch critic of U.S. foreign policy. Chomsky writes extensively and lectures around the world on international affairs, U.S. foreign policy, and human rights. This essay is reprinted from Noam Chomsky's new book **Rogue States—The Rule of Force in World Affairs**, the latest result of Chomsky's efforts to measure the world's superpowers by their own professed standards and to hold them responsible for the indefensible actions they commit. The book is available from South End Press, 7 Brookline Street #1, Cambridge, MA 02139.*

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In 1999, Colombia became the leading recipient of US military and police assistance, replacing Turkey (Israel and Egypt are in a separate category). Colombia receives more US military aid than the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean combined. The total for 1999 reached about \$300 million, along with \$60 million in arms sales, approximately a threefold increase from 1998. The figure is scheduled to increase still more sharply with the anticipated passage of some version of Clinton's Colombia Plan, submitted to Congress in April 2000, which called for a \$1.6 billion "emergency aid" package for two years. Through the 1990s, Colombia has been by far the leading recipient of US military aid in Latin America, and has also compiled by far the worst human rights record, in conformity with a well-established and long-standing correlation.<sup>1</sup>

In theory, "Plan Colombia" is a two-year Colombian government program of \$7.5 billion, with the US providing the military muscle and token funds for other purposes, and some \$6 billion from the Colombian government, Europe, the IMF, and the World Bank for social and economic programs that Colombia is to prepare. According to non-US diplomats, the draft of "Plan Colombia" was written in English, not Spanish. The military program (arms, training, intelligence infrastructure) was in place in late 1999, but "the Colombian govern-



ment has yet to present a coherent social investment program” as of mid-2000, and few governments are “willing to climb aboard what is widely perceived as an American project to clean up its backyard,” by means that are familiar to those who do not choose what has been called “intentional ignorance.”<sup>2</sup>

We can often learn from systematic patterns, so let us tarry for a moment on the previous champion, Turkey. As a major US military ally and strategic outpost, Turkey has received substantial military aid from the origins of the Cold War. But arms deliveries began to increase sharply in 1984. Evidently, there was no Cold War connection at all. Rather, that was the year when Turkey initiated a large-scale counterinsurgency campaign in the Kurdish southeast, which also is the site of major US air bases and the locus of regional surveillance, so that everything that happens there is well known in Washington. Arms deliveries peaked in 1997. In that year alone, they exceeded the total from the entire period 1950-83. US arms amounted to about 80 percent of

mission then released a six-volume report based on a two-year investigation, with photographs and other details, confirming extensive evidence that the abuses are systematic, and continue without significant change. These revelations received little notice, ignoring Washington’s involvement, but the press did feature impassioned rhetoric on the need to maintain very harsh sanctions against Cuba because its human rights violations so offend our humanitarian sensibilities. The parliamentary inquiry into the ongoing atrocities supported lavishly by Washington perhaps received oblique acknowledgment in a report by New York Times bureau chief Stephen Kinzer on Turkey’s current progress, shown by the military’s willingness to permit films that “portray the torture that was widespread in military prisons” in the early 1980s.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, despite the great success achieved by some of the most violent state terror of the 1990s, military operations continue, while Kurds are still deprived of elementary rights.<sup>6</sup> On

**Hailed as a leading democracy by Clinton and other US leaders and political commentators, Colombia did at last permit an independent party (UP, Patriotic Union) to challenge the long-standing elite system of power-sharing. The UP party, founded by the guerrillas (primarily the FARC, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) and drawing in part from their constituencies, faced certain difficulties, however, including the rapid assassination of about 3,000 activists, including presidential candidates, mayors, and legislators. The results taught lessons to the guerrillas about the prospects for entering the political system.**

Turkish military equipment, including heavy armaments (jet planes, tanks, etc.), often evading congressional restrictions.<sup>3</sup>

By 1999, Turkey had largely suppressed Kurdish resistance by extreme terror and ethnic cleansing, leaving some 2 to 3 million refugees, 3,500 villages destroyed (seven times as high as in Kosovo under NATO bombs), and tens of thousands killed, primarily during the Clinton years. A huge flow of US arms was no longer needed to accomplish these objectives. Turkey can therefore be singled out for praise for its “positive experiences” in showing how “tough counterterrorism measures plus political dialogue with non-terrorist opposition groups” can overcome the plague of violence and atrocities, so we learn from the lead article in the New York Times on the State Department’s “latest annual report describing the administration’s efforts to combat terrorism.”<sup>4</sup> More evidence, if such is needed, that cynicism is utterly without limits.

A few days later more was reported about Turkey’s “positive experiences” with “tough counterterrorism measures.” Turkey’s parliamentary human rights commission described “widespread resort to torture” by the police and “an array of torture equipment,” and a spokesperson informed the press that visits to the eastern region had “confirmed grim tales of torture” in police prison cells, specifically those of anti-terrorism units. The com-

April 1, 2000, 10,000 Turkish troops began new ground sweeps in the regions that had been most devastated by the US-Turkish terror campaigns of the preceding years, also launching another offensive into northern Iraq to attack Kurdish guerrilla forces (PKK) - in a no-fly zone where Kurds are protected by the US air force from the (temporarily) wrong oppressor. Asked about the renewed operations in Iraq, State Department spokesperson James Rubin said that US “policy remains the same. We support the right of Turkey to defend itself against PKK attacks, so long as its incursions are limited in scope and duration and fully respect the rights of the civilian inhabitants of the region”; he declined to answer the question whether Turkey had been “attacked,” stating only that the US had no “independent confirmation” of Turkish military operations in this region of intense surveillance and regular US bombardment.<sup>7</sup> As the renewed Turkish campaigns were beginning, Secretary of Defense William Cohen addressed the American-Turkish Council, a festive occasion with much laughter and applause, according to the government report.<sup>8</sup> He praised Turkey for taking part in the humanitarian bombing of Yugoslavia, apparently without embarrassment, and announced that Turkey had been invited to join in co-production of the new Joint Strike Aircraft, just as it has been co-producing the F-16s that it used to such good effect in approved varieties of ethnic cleans-



ing and atrocities within its own territory, as a loyal member of NATO.

In Colombia, however, the military armed and trained by the United States has not crushed domestic resistance, though it continues to produce its regular annual toll of atrocities. Each year, some 300,000 new refugees are driven from their homes, with a death toll of about 3,000 and many horrible massacres. The great majority of atrocities are attributed to paramilitary forces. These are closely linked to the military, as documented in considerable and shocking detail once again in February 2000 by Human Rights Watch, and in April 2000 by a UN study which reported that the Colombian security forces that are to be greatly strengthened by the Colombia Plan maintain an intimate relationship with death squads, organize paramilitary forces, and either participate in their massacres directly or, by failing to take action, have "undoubt-

ber 1999 that the rate of killings had increased by almost 20 percent over the preceding year, and that the proportion attributable to the paramilitaries had risen from 46 percent in 1995 to almost 80 percent in 1998, continuing through 1999. The Colombian government's Human Rights Ombudsman's Office (Defensoria del Pueblo) reported a 68 percent increase in massacres in the first half of 1999 as compared to the same period of 1998, reaching more than one a day, overwhelmingly attributed to paramilitaries. Daniel Bland, a human rights researcher who worked in Colombia through most of the 1990s, concludes that in the past three years alone, "more than a million people have been forced from their homes in the countryside, and between 5,000 and 7,000 unarmed peasants have been slaughtered by right-wing paramilitaries." Of nine people he interviewed for a documentary on human rights in 1997—professors, journalists,

**The counterinsurgency battalions armed and trained by the US do not attack traffickers, Vargas reports, but "have as their target the weakest and most socially fragile link of the drug chain: the production by peasants, settlers, and indigenous people." The same is true of the chemical and biological weapons that Washington employs, used experimentally in violation of manufacturers' specifications, and over the objections of the Colombian government and agricultural associations. These measures multiply the "dangers to the civilian population, the environment, and legal agriculture." They destroy "legal food crops like yucca and bananas, water sources, pastures, livestock, and all the crops included in crop substitution programs," including those of well-established Church-run development projects that have sought to develop alternatives to coca production. There are also uncertain but potentially severe effects "on the fragile tropical rainforest environment."**

edly enabled the paramilitary groups to achieve their exterminating objectives." In more muted terms, the State Department confirms the general picture in its annual human rights reports, again in the report covering 1999, which concludes that "security forces actively collaborated with members of paramilitary groups" while "government forces continued to commit numerous, serious abuses, including extrajudicial killings, at a level that was roughly similar to that of 1998," when the report attributed about 80 percent of attributable atrocities to the military and paramilitaries. The picture is confirmed as well by the Colombian Office of UN Human Rights Commissioner Mary Robinson. Its director, a respected Swedish diplomat, assigns the responsibility for "the magnitude and complexity of the paramilitary phenomenon" to the Colombian government, hence indirectly to its US sponsor.<sup>9</sup>

Resort to paramilitary forces for atrocities is well-established practice, for understandable reasons, including in recent years Serbia in Kosovo and Indonesia in East Timor (though in the latter case, the facts were suppressed in favor of "militia violence" and "rogue elements" as long as possible). There is a long history in the practice of terrorist states and imperial powers.

The Colombian Commission of Jurists reported in Septem-

priests, human rights workers—"three have since been murdered by paramilitary gunmen; four have fled with their families after receiving death threats." UNICEF and the Colombian Human Rights Information Bureau CODRES estimate that in June-August 1999 alone, 200,000 more people were driven from their homes.<sup>10</sup>

It would be unfair to charge Washington with lack of concern over paramilitary terror. After the April 2000 release of its annual report "describing the administration's efforts to combat terrorism," praising Turkey for its "positive experiences" in this common pursuit, the State Department held a press conference on the report. Counterterrorism Coordinator Michael Sheehan was asked why the Colombian paramilitaries are not listed among terrorist groups, though the State Department has long recognized them to be responsible for the overwhelming majority of the atrocities, including the most atrocious of them, and they are surely the most violent and brutal terrorist organization in the Western hemisphere, ranking high in the world. They are, furthermore, agents of the more serious crime of state terrorism, in view of their close relation to the military establishment in Colombia, hence also the United States. Sheehan explained that the



paramilitaries do not escape Washington's vigilant eye, but the Department cannot jump to conclusions. Terrorists are identified in the report only after scrupulous investigation. "it's a legal process, and one that was very meticulous." The paramilitaries are "under review right now" and "if we come up with a case, if we can make the case from our legal definition, they'll be designated" as terrorists.

In contrast, Cuba easily satisfies the requirements as one of the seven states engaged in terrorism, as demonstrated in the 85 words devoted to it in this 107-page document. The State Department would be "absolutely" ready to take its case against Cuba to Court, Sheehan stated: after all, Cuba "has links to several terrorist organizations that it needs to address," including the Colombian guerrilla organizations. These do satisfy the Department's meticulous criteria—by definition, a realistic commentator might add, since the US opposes them.<sup>11</sup>

We may recall that in the early months of 1999, while massacres were proceeding at over one a day in Colombia, there was also a large increase in atrocities (including many massacres) in East Timor, carried out by Indonesian commandos armed and trained by the US. In one massacre alone, in a church in Liquica on April 6, 1999, Western investigators believe that 200 or more people were murdered. An American Police officer on the scene comments that "officially we must stay with the number of bodies that we have actually lifted, but the total number of people killed in this district is much, much higher than that, perhaps even astronomical." The full story will never be known, because the plea of the UN mission for forensic experts was rejected by the US and its allies—unlike Kosovo, teeming with investigators at once in an effort to find atrocities that could provide retrospective justification for the NATO bombing that precipitated them, by intriguing logic.<sup>12</sup>

In both Colombia and East Timor, the conclusion drawn was exactly as in Turkey: support the killers. There was also one reported massacre in Kosovo, at Racak on January 15, 1999 (45 killed). That event allegedly inspired such horror among Western humanitarians that it was necessary to bomb Yugoslavia 10 weeks later with the expectation, quickly fulfilled, that the consequence would be a sharp escalation of atrocities. The accompanying torrent of self-adulation, which has few, if any, counterparts, heralded a "new era" in human affairs in which the "enlightened states" will selflessly dedicate themselves to the de-

fense of human rights, guided by "principles and values" for the first time in history.<sup>13</sup> Putting aside the actual facts about Kosovo, the performance was greatly facilitated by silence or deceit about the active participation of the same powers in comparable or worse atrocities at the very same time.

Returning to Colombia, prominent human rights activists continue to flee abroad under death threats, including the courageous head of the Church-based human rights group Justice and Peace, Father Javier Gairaido, who has played an outstanding role in defending human rights. The AFL-CIO reports that several trade unionists are murdered every week, mostly by paramilitaries supported by the government security forces. Forced displacement in 1998 was 20 percent above 1997, and increased again in 1999 in some regions, according to Human Rights Watch. Colombia now has the largest displaced population in the world, after Sudan and Angola.<sup>14</sup>

Hailed as a leading democracy by Clinton and other US lead-

ers and political commentators, Colombia did at last permit an independent party (UP, Patriotic Union) to challenge the long-standing elite system of power-sharing. The UP party, founded by the guerrillas (primarily the FARC, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) and drawing in part from their constituencies, faced certain difficulties, however, in-



cluding the rapid assassination of about 3,000 activists, including presidential candidates, mayors, and legislators. The results taught lessons to the guerrillas about the prospects for entering the political system.<sup>15</sup> Washington also drew lessons from these and related events of the same period. The Clinton administration was particularly impressed with the performance of President Cesar Gaviria, who presided over the escalation of state terror—so impressed that it induced (some say compelled) the Organization of American States to accept him as Secretary-General on grounds that "he has been very forward looking in building democratic institutions in a country where it was sometimes dangerous to do so"—which is surely true, in large measure because of the actions of his government. A more significant reason, perhaps, is that he was also "forward-looking ... on economic reform in Colombia and on economic integration in the hemisphere," code words that are readily interpreted.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, deplorable socioeconomic conditions persist, leaving much of the population in misery in a rich country with concentration of wealth and land-ownership that is high even by



the shameful standards of Latin America generally. The situation became worse in the 1990s as a result of the “neoliberal reforms” formalized in the 1991 constitution, which reduced still further “the effective participation of civil society” in policy formation by “reforms intended to enhance executive power and reduce the autonomy of the judicial and legislative branches, and by concentrating macroeconomic planning in the hands of a smaller circle of technocrats”—in effect, adjuncts of Washington. The “neoliberal reforms have also given rise to alarming levels of poverty and inequality; approximately 55 percent of Colombia’s population lives below the poverty level” and “this situation has been aggravated by an acute crisis in agriculture, itself a result of the neoliberal program,” as in Latin America generally.<sup>17</sup>

The respected president of the Colombian Permanent Committee for Human Rights, former Minister of Foreign Affairs Alfredo Vizquez Caffizosa, writes that it is “poverty and insufficient land reform” that “have made Colombia one of the most tragic countries of Latin America,” though as elsewhere, “violence has been exacerbated by external factors,” primarily the initiatives of the Kennedy administration, which “took great pains to transform our regular armies into counterinsurgency brigades.” These initiatives ushered in “what is known in Latin America as the National Security Doctrine,” which is not concerned with “defense against an external enemy” but rather “the internal enemy.” The new “strategy of the death squads” accords the military “the right to fight and to exterminate social workers, trade unionists, men and women who are not supportive of the establishment, and who are assumed to be communist extremists.” The general goal, as explained by the foremost US academic specialist on human rights in Latin America, was “to destroy permanently a perceived threat to the existing structure of socio-economic privilege by eliminating the political participation of the numerical majority,” the “popular classes.”<sup>18</sup>

As part of its strategy of converting the Latin American military from “hemispheric defense” to “internal security”—meaning war against the domestic population—Kennedy dispatched a military mission to Colombia in 1962 headed by Special Forces General William Yarborough. He proposed “reforms” to enable the security forces to “as necessary execute paramilitary, sabotage, and/or terrorist activities against known Communist proponents”—the “communist extremists” to whom Vizquez Carrizosa alludes.<sup>19</sup>

Again the broader patterns are worth noting. Shortly after, Lyndon Johnson escalated Kennedy’s war against South Vietnam—what is called here “the defense of South Vietnam,” just as Russia called its war against Afghanistan “the defense of Afghanistan.” In January 1965, US special forces in South Vietnam were issued standing orders “to conduct operations to dislodge VC-controlled officials, to include assassination,” and more generally to use such “pacification” techniques as “ambushing, raiding, sabotaging, and committing acts of terrorism against known VC personnel,” the counterparts of the “known Communist proponents” in Colombia.<sup>20</sup>

A Colombian governmental commission concluded that “the criminalization of social protest” is one of the “principal factors which permit and encourage violations of human rights” by the military and police authorities and their paramilitary collaborators. Ten years ago, as US-backed state terror was increasing

sharply, the Minister of Defense called for “total war in the political, economic, and social arenas,” while another high military official explained that guerrillas were of secondary importance: “the real danger” is “what the insurgents have called the political and psychological war,” the war “to control the popular elements” and “to manipulate the masses.” The “subversives” hope to influence unions, universities, media, and so on. “Every individual who in one or another manner supports the goals of the enemy must be considered a traitor and treated in that manner,” a 1963 military manual prescribed, as the Kennedy initiatives were moving into high gear. Since the official goals of the guerrillas are social democratic, the circle of treachery targeted for terror operations is wide.<sup>21</sup>

In the years that followed, the Kennedy-Yarborough strategy was developed and applied broadly in “our little region over here,” as the Western hemisphere was described by FDR’s Secretary of War Henry Stimson when he was explaining why the US was entitled to control its own regional system while all others were to be dismantled. Violent repression spread throughout Latin America, beginning in the southern cone and reaching its awesome peak in Central America in the 1980s as the stern disciplinarian of the North responded with extreme violence to efforts by the Church and other “subversives” to confront a terrible legacy of misery and repression. Colombia’s advance to first rank among the criminal states in “our little region” is in part the result of the decline in US-managed state terror in Central America, which achieved its primary aims as in Turkey 10 years later, leaving in its wake a “culture of terror” that “domesticat[es] the expectations of the majority” and undermines aspirations towards “alternatives different to those of the powerful,” in the words of Salvadoran Jesuits, who learned the lessons from bitter experience; those who survived the US assault, that is. In Colombia, however, the problem of establishing approved forms of democracy and stability remains, and is even becoming more severe. One approach would be to address the needs and concerns of the poor majority. Another is to provide arms and military training to keep things as they are.

Quite predictably, the announcement of the Colombia Plan led to countermeasures by the guerrillas, in particular, a demand that everyone with assets of more than \$1 million pay a “revolutionary tax” or face the threat of kidnapping (as the FARC puts it, the threat of jailing for non-payment of taxes). The motivation is explained by the London Financial Times: “In the Farc’s eyes, financing is required to fight fire with fire. The government is seeking \$1.3 [billion] in military aid from the US, ostensibly for counter-drugs operations: the Farc believe the new weapons will be trained on them. They appear ready to arm themselves for battle,” which will lead to military escalation and undermining of the fragile but ongoing peace negotiations.<sup>22</sup>

According to New York Times reporter Larry Rohter, “ordinary Colombians” are “angered” by the government’s peace negotiations, which ceded control to the FARC of a large region that they already controlled, and the “embittered residents” of that region also oppose the guerrillas. No evidence is cited. The leading Colombian military analyst Alfredo Rangel sees matters differently. He “makes a point of reminding interviewers that the FARC has significant support in the regions where it operates,” Alina Guillermoprieto reports. Rangel cites “FARC’s ability to



launch surprise attacks” in different parts of the country, a fact that is “politically significant” because “in each case, a single warning by the civilian population would be enough to alert the army, and it doesn’t happen.”<sup>23</sup>

The situation is not unfamiliar. An example that should be well known is the startling success of the Tet offensive throughout South Vietnam in January 1968, in cities and towns as well as rural areas. Though the territory was occupied by over half a million US troops, with a huge client army and police apparatus, the uprising of South Vietnamese guerrillas came as an almost complete surprise, with no advance warning, revealing how deeply the guerrillas were embedded in the general population (North Vietnamese forces were largely confined to border regions, according to US intelligence). Though more convenient tales have been constructed in the course of reshaping of history, the facts were clear enough to convince US elites that the effort to crush resistance in South Vietnam was too costly to pursue.

On the same day that Rohter reported “the anger of ordinary Colombians,” the London Financial Times reported an “innovative forum” in the FARC-controlled region, one of many held there to allow “members of the public to participate in the current peace talks.” They come from all parts of Colombia, speaking before TV cameras and meeting with senior FARC leaders. Included are union and business leaders, farmers, and others. A trade union leader from Colombia’s second-largest city, Cali, “gave heart to those who believe that talking will end the country’s long-running conflict,” addressing both the government and FARC leaders. He directed his remarks specifically to “Senor Marulanda,” the long-time FARC peasant leader “who minutes earlier had entered to a rousing ovation,” telling him that “unemployment is not a problem caused by the violence,” but “by the national government and the businessmen of this country.” Business leaders also spoke, but “were heckled by the large body of trade union representatives who had also come to speak.” Against a background of “union cheers,” a FARC spokesperson “put forward one of the clearest visions yet of his organization’s economic program,” calling for freezing of privatization, subsidizing energy and agriculture as is done in the rich countries, and stimulation of the economy by protecting local enterprises. The government representative, who “emphasized export-led growth and private participation,” nevertheless described the FARC statement as “raw material for the negotiations,” though FARC, “bolstered by evident popular discontent with ‘neoliberal’ government policies,” argued that those who

“have monopolized power” must yield in the negotiations.<sup>24</sup>

The potential scale of the Colombia Plan is suggested by regional US military projects. The Salvadoran press reports a US-Salvadoran agreement, still to be ratified by the Salvadoran legislature, to allow the US Navy to use a Salvadoran airport as a “Forward Operating Location” (FOL), in addition to US Air Force FOLs in the Ecuadoran port city of Manta and the Dutch colonies of Aruba and Curacao. The intergovernmental agreements reportedly allow the US total discretion over aircraft and weaponry, with no local inspection or control permitted. Ecuadoran military experts express concern that the Manta military base is perhaps being prepared for “eventual Kosovo-style aerial bombardments, ... an air war waged from bases used by the United States in the region, and from sea, in which planes and missiles would play a major role.”<sup>25</sup>

The Colombia Plan is officially justified in terms of the “drug war,”<sup>26</sup> a claim taken seriously by few competent analysts. The US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) reports that “all branches of government” in Colombia are involved in “drug-related corruption.” In November 1998, US Customs and DEA inspectors found 415 kg of cocaine and 6 kg of heroin in a Colombian Air Force plane that had landed in Florida, leading to the arrest of several Air Force officers and enlisted personnel.<sup>27</sup> Other observers too have reported the heavy involvement of the military in narcotrafficking, and the

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US military has also been drawn in. The wife of Colonel James Hiatt pleaded guilty to conspiracy to smuggle heroin from Colombia to New York, and shortly after, it was reported that Colonel Hiatt himself, who is in charge of US troops that trained Colombian security forces in “counternarcotics operations,” was “expected to plead guilty” to charges of complicity.<sup>28</sup> The paramilitaries openly proclaim their reliance on the drug business. “The leader of the paramilitaries [Carlos Castano] acknowledged in a television interview that the drug trade provided 70 percent of the group’s funding,” correspondent John Donnelly reported in March 2000. This was the first appearance on Colombian TV of Castano, who heads the largest and most brutal of the paramilitary organizations. He claimed to command a force of 11,200 men “financed by extortion and income from 30,000 hectares of coca fields in Norte de Santander.”<sup>29</sup> But “the US-financed attack stays clear of the areas controlled by paramilitary forces,” Donnelly observes, as have many others. The targets of the Colombia Plan are guerrilla forces based on the peasantry and calling for internal social change, which would interfere with inte-



gration of Colombia into the global system on the terms that the US demands: dominated by elites linked to US power interests that are accorded privileged access to Colombia's valuable resources, including oil—quite possibly a significant factor behind the Colombia Plan.

In standard US terminology, the FARC forces are “narcoguerrillas,” a useful concept as a cover for counterinsurgency, but one that has been disputed by knowledgeable observers. It is agreed—and FARC leaders say—that they rely for funding on coca production, which they tax, as they tax other businesses. But “the guerrillas are something different from the traffickers,” says Klaus Nyholm who runs the UN Drug Control Program,” which has agents throughout the drug-producing regions. He believes the local FARC fronts to be “quite autonomous.”<sup>30</sup> In some areas “they are not involved at all” in coca production, and in others “they actively tell the farmers not to grow [coca].”

Andean drug specialist Ricardo Vargas describes the role of the guerrillas as “primarily focused on taxation of illicit crops.” They have called for “a development plan for the peasants” that would “allow eradication of coca on the basis of alternative crops.” “That’s all we want,” their leader Marulanda has publicly announced, as have other spokespersons.<sup>31</sup>

But let us put these matters aside and consider a few other questions.

Why do peasants in Colombia grow coca, not other crops? The reasons are understood. “Peasants grow coca and poppies,” Vargas observes, “because of the crisis in the agricultural sector of Latin American countries, escalated by the general economic crisis in the region.” Peasants began colonizing the Colombian Amazon in the 1950s, he writes, “following the violent displace-

ment of peasants by large landholders,” and they found that coca was “the only product that was both profitable and easy to market.” Pressures on the peasantry substantially increased as “ranchers, investors, and legal commercial farmers have created and strengthened private armies”—the paramilitaries—that “serve as a means to violently expropriate land from indigenous people, peasants, and settlers,” with the result that “traffickers now control much of Colombia’s valuable land.” The counterinsurgency battalions armed and trained by the US do not attack traffickers, Vargas reports, but “have as their target the weakest and most socially fragile link of the drug chain: the production by peasants, settlers, and indigenous people.”

The same is true of the chemical and biological weapons that Washington employs, used experimentally in violation of manufacturers’ specifications, and over the objections of the Colombian government and agricultural associations. These measures multiply the “dangers to the civilian population, the environment, and legal agriculture.” They destroy “legal food crops like yucca and bananas, water sources, pastures, livestock, and all the crops included in crop substitution programs,” including those of well-established Church-run development projects that have



These campesino children stand in a field of yucca that has been destroyed. Yucca, a local staple, withers and dies within three days of fumigation. ([www.usfumigation.org](http://www.usfumigation.org))

sought to develop alternatives to coca production. There are also uncertain but potentially severe effects “on the fragile tropical rainforest environment.”<sup>32</sup>

Traditional US programs, and the current Colombia Plan as well, primarily support the social forces that control the government and the military/paramilitary system, and that have largely created the problems by their rapacity and violence. The targets are the usual victims.

There are other factors that operate to increase coca production. Colombia was once a major wheat producer. That was un-



dermined in the 1950s by "Food for Peace" aid, a program that provided taxpayer subsidies to US agribusiness and induced other countries to "become dependent on us for food" (Senator Hubert Humphrey, representing Midwest agricultural exporters), with counterpart funds for US client states, which they commonly used for military spending and counterinsurgency. A year before President Bush announced the "drug war" with great fanfare (once again), the international coffee agreement was suspended under US pressure, on grounds of "fair trade violations." The result was a fall of prices of more than 40 percent within two months for Colombia's leading legal export.<sup>33</sup>

Related factors are discussed by political economist Susan Strange.<sup>34</sup> In the 1960s, the G77 governments (now 133, accounting for 80 percent of the world's population) initiated a call for a "new international economic order" in which the needs of the large majority of people of the world would be a prominent concern. Specific proposals were formulated by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which was established in 1964 "to create an international trading system consistent with

discipline is for the defenseless, not for them. The upstart free-market ideologues were soon taught better manners or dispatched back home, but not before Congress passed the 1996 "Freedom to Farm Act" to liberate American agriculture from the "East German socialist programs of the New Deal," as Newt Gingrich put it, ending market-distorting subsidies—which quickly tripled, reaching a record \$23 billion in 1999, and are scheduled to increase. The market has worked its magic, however: the taxpayer subsidies go disproportionately to large agribusiness and the "corporate oligopolies" that dominate the input and output side, Nicholas Kristof observed. Those with market power in the food chain (from energy corporations to retailers) are enjoying great profits while the agricultural crisis, which is real, is concentrated in the middle of the chain, among smaller farmers, who produce the food.<sup>36</sup>

One of the leading principles of modern economic history is that the devices used by the rich and powerful to ensure that they are protected by the nanny state are not to be available to the poor. Accordingly, the UNCTAD initiative to stabilize commod-

**IMF-World Bank programs demand that countries open their borders to a flood of (heavily subsidized) agricultural products from the rich countries, with the obvious effect of undermining local production. Those displaced are either driven to urban slums (thus lowering wage rates for foreign investors) or instructed to become "rational peasants," producing for the export market and seeking the highest prices—which translates as "coca, cannabis, opium." Having learned their lessons properly, they are rewarded by attack by military gunships while their fields are destroyed by chemical and biological warfare, courtesy of Washington.**

the promotion of economic and social development." The UNCTAD proposals were summarily dismissed by the great powers, along with the call for a "new international order" generally; the US, in particular, insists that "development is not a right," and that it is "preposterous" and a "dangerous incitement" to hold otherwise in accord with the socioeconomic provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the US rejects.<sup>35</sup> The world did move—or more accurately, was moved—towards a new international economic order, but along a different course, catering to the needs of a different sector, namely its designers—hardly a surprise, any more than one should be surprised that in standard doctrine the instituted form of "globalization" should be depicted as an inexorable process to which "there is no alternative" (TINA), as Margaret Thatcher thoughtfully declared.

One early UNCTAD proposal was a program for stabilizing commodity prices, routine practice within the industrial countries by means of public subsidy, though it was threatened briefly in the US when Congress was taken over in 1994 by right-wing elements that seemed to believe their own rhetoric, much to the consternation of business leaders who understand that market

ity prices was quickly shot down; the organization itself has been largely marginalized and tamed, along with others that reflect, to some extent at least, the interests of the global majority.<sup>37</sup> Reviewing these events, Strange observes that farmers were therefore compelled to turn to crops for which there is a stable market. Large-scale agribusiness can tolerate fluctuation of commodity prices, compensating for temporary losses elsewhere. Poor peasants cannot tell their children: "don't worry, maybe you'll have something to eat next year." The result, Strange continues, was that drug entrepreneurs could easily "find farmers eager to grow coca, cannabis, or opium," for which there is always a ready market in the rich societies.

Other programs of the US and the global institutions it dominates magnify these effects. The current Clinton plan for Colombia includes only token funding for alternative crops, and none at all for areas under guerrilla control, though FARC leaders have repeatedly expressed their hope that alternatives will be provided so that peasants will not be compelled to grow coca to survive. "By the end of 1999, the United States had spent a grand total of \$750,000 on alternative development programs," the Center for



International Policy reports, "all of it in heroin poppy-growing areas far from the southern plains" that are targeted in the Colombia Plan, which does, however, call for "assistance to civilians to be displaced by the push into southern Colombia," a section of the plan that the Center finds "especially disturbing." The Clinton administration also insists—over the objections of the Colombian government—that any peace agreement must permit crop destruction measures.<sup>38</sup> Constructive approaches are not barred, but they are someone else's business. The US will concentrate on military operations—which, incidentally, happen to benefit the high-tech industries that produce military equipment and are engaged in "extensive lobbying" for the Colombia Plan, along with Occidental Petroleum which has large investments in Colombia, and other corporations.<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, IMF-World Bank programs demand that countries open their borders to a flood of (heavily subsidized) agricultural products from the rich countries, with the obvious effect of undermining local production. Those displaced are either driven to urban slums (thus lowering wage rates for foreign investors) or instructed to become "rational peasants," producing for the export market and seeking the highest prices—which translates as "coca, cannabis, opium." Having learned their lessons properly, they are rewarded by attack by military gunships while their fields are destroyed by chemical and biological warfare, courtesy of Washington.

Much the same is true throughout the Andean region. The issues broke through briefly to the public eye just as the Colombia Plan was being debated in Washington. On April 8, 2000, the government of Bolivia declared a state of emergency after widespread protests closed down the city of Cochabamba, Bolivia's third largest. The protests were over the privatization of the public water system and the sharp increase in water rates to a level beyond the reach of much of

the population. In the background is an economic crisis attributed in part to the neoliberal policies that culminate in the drug war, which has destroyed more than half of the country's coca-leaf production, leaving the "rational peasants" destitute. A week later, farmers blockaded a highway near the capital city of La Paz to protest the eradication of coca leaf, the only mode of survival left to them under the "reforms," as actually implemented.

Reporting on the protests over water prices and the eradication programs, the Financial Times observes that "the World Bank and the IMF saw Bolivia as something of a model," one of the great success stories of the "Washington consensus," but the April protests reveal that "the success of eradication programs in Peru and Bolivia has carried a high social cost." The journal quotes a European diplomat in Bolivia who says that "until a couple of

weeks ago, Bolivia was regarded as a success story"—by those who "regard" a country while disregarding its people. But now, he continues, "the international community has to recognize that the economic reforms have not really done anything to solve the growing problems of poverty"; they may well have deepened it. The secretary of the Bolivian bishops' conference, which mediated an agreement to end the crisis, described the protest movement as "the result of dire poverty. The demands of the rural population must be listened to if we want lasting peace."<sup>40</sup>

The Cochabamba protests were aimed at the World Bank and the San Francisco/London-based Bechtel corporation, the main financial power behind the transnational conglomerate that bought the public water system amidst serious charges of corruption and give-away, then doubled rates for many poor customers. Under Bank pressure, Bolivia has sold major assets to private

(almost always foreign) corporations. The sale of the public water system and rate increases set off months of protest culminating in the demonstration that paralyzed the city. Government policies adhered to World Bank recommendations that "no subsidies should be given to ameliorate the increase in water tariffs in Cochabamba"; all users, including the very poor, must pay full costs. Using the internet, activists in Bolivia called for international protests, which had a significant impact, presumably amplified by the Washington protests over World Bank-IMF policies then underway. Bechtel backed off, and the government rescinded the sale.<sup>41</sup> But a long and difficult struggle lies ahead.

As martial law was declared in Bolivia, a report from southern Colombia described the spreading fears that fumigation planes were coming to "drop their poison on the coca fields, which would also kill the farmers' subsistence crops, cause massive social disruption, and stir up the ever-present threat of violence." The pervasive fear and anger reflect "the level of dread and con-

fusion in this part of Colombia."<sup>42</sup>

Another question lurks not too far in the background. Just what right does the US have to carry out military operations and chemical-biological warfare in other countries to destroy a crop it doesn't like? We can put aside the cynical response that the governments requested this "assistance"; or else. We therefore must ask whether others have the same extraterritorial right to violence and destruction that the US demands.

The number of Colombians who die from US-produced lethal drugs exceeds the number of North Americans who die from cocaine, and is far greater relative to population. In East and Southeast Asia, US-produced lethal drugs contribute to millions of deaths. These countries are compelled not only to accept the products but also advertising for them, under threat of trade sanc-



Two assassinated teachers are escorted to their place of rest by students and colleagues.



tions. The effects of "aggressive marketing and advertising by American firms is, in a good measure, responsible for ... a sizeable increase in smoking rates for women and youth in Asian countries where doors were forced open by threat of severe US trade sanctions," public health researchers conclude.<sup>43</sup> The Colombian cartels, in contrast, are not permitted to run huge advertising campaigns in which a Joe Camel counterpart extols the wonders of cocaine.

Thanks to the US passion for "free trade" and "freedom of speech" for advertisers of murderous substances, global cigarette exports have expanded sharply, with a fivefold increase from 1975 to 1996,<sup>44</sup> a dramatic illustration of some of the welfare outcomes of the fanatic political theology that elevates "trade" to the highest rank among human values—"trade" in quotes, because of the highly ideological construction of the concept.

We are therefore entitled, indeed, morally obligated, to ask whether Colombia, Thailand, China, and other targets of US trade policies and aggressive promotion of lethal exports have the right to conduct military, chemical, and biological warfare in North Carolina. And if not, why not?

We might also ask why there are no Delta Force raids on US banks and chemical corporations, though it is no secret that they too are engaged in the narcotrafficking business. We might ask further why the Pentagon is not gearing up to attack Canada, now displacing Colombia and Mexico as a supplier of marijuana; high-potency varieties have become British Columbia's most valuable agricultural product and one of the most important sectors of the economy (in Quebec and Manitoba as well), with a tenfold increase in the past two years. Or to attack the United States, a major producer of marijuana with production rapidly expanding, including hydroponic groweries, and long the center of manufacture of high-

tech illicit drugs (ATS, amphetamine-type stimulants), the fastest-growing sector of drug abuse, with 30 million users worldwide, probably surpassing heroin and cocaine.<sup>45</sup> There is no need to review in detail the lethal effects of US drugs. The Supreme Court recently concluded that it has been "amply demonstrated" that tobacco use is "perhaps the single most significant threat to public health in the United States," responsible for more than 400,000 deaths a year, more than AIDS, car accidental alcohol, homicides, illegal drugs, suicides, and fires combined; the Court virtually called on Congress to legislate controls. As use of this lethal substance has declined in the US, and producers have been compelled to pay substantial indemnities to victims, they have shifted to markets abroad, another standard practice. The death toll is incalculable. Oxford University epidemiologist Richard

Peto estimated that in China alone, among children under 20 today, 50 million will die of cigarette-related diseases, a substantial number because of highly selective US "free trade" doctrine.<sup>46</sup>

In comparison to the 400,000 deaths caused by tobacco every year in the United States, drug-related deaths reached a record 16,000 in 1997. Furthermore, only 4 out of 10 addicts who needed treatment received it, according to a White House report.<sup>47</sup> These facts raise further questions about the motives for the drug war. The seriousness of concern over use of drugs was illustrated again when a House Committee was considering the Clinton Colombia Plan. It rejected an amendment proposed by California Democrat Nancy Pelosi calling for funding of drug demand-reduction services. It is well known that treatment and prevention are far more effective than forceful measures. A widely cited Rand Corporation study sponsored by the US Army and Office of National Drug Control Policy found that funds spent on domestic drug treatment were 23 times as effective as "source country control" (Clinton's Colombia Plan), 11 times as effective as interdiction, and 7 times as effective as domestic law enforcement.<sup>48</sup>

But the inexpensive and effective path will not be followed. Rather, the "drug war" is crafted to target poor peasants abroad and poor people at home; by the use of force, not constructive measures to alleviate the problems that allegedly motivate it, at a fraction of the cost.

While Clinton's Colombia Plan was being formulated, senior administration officials discussed a proposal by the Office of Management and Budget to take \$100 million from the \$1.3 billion then planned for Colombia, to be used for treatment for US addicts. There was near-unanimous opposition, particularly from "drug czar" General Barry McCaffrey, and the proposal was dropped. In contrast, when Richard Nixon—in many re-

spects the last liberal president—declared a drug war in 1971, two-thirds of the funding went to treatment, which reached record numbers of addicts; there was a sharp drop in drug-related arrests and the number of federal prison inmates. Since 1980, however, "the war on drugs has shifted to punishing offenders, border surveillance, and fighting production at the source countries."<sup>49</sup> One consequence is an enormous increase in drug-related (often victimless) crimes and an explosion in the prison population, reaching levels far beyond that in any industrial country and possibly a world record, with no detectable effect on availability or price of drugs.

Such observations, hardly obscure, raise the question of what the drug war is all about. It is recognized widely that it fails to achieve its stated ends, and the failed methods are then pursued

**Criminologist Michael Tonry concludes that "the war's planners knew exactly what they were doing." What they were doing is, first, getting rid of the "superfluous population," the "disposable people"—"desechables," as they are called in Colombia, where they are eliminated by "social cleansing"; and second, frightening everyone else, not an unimportant task in a period when a domestic form of "structural adjustment" is being imposed, with significant costs for the majority of the populations.**



more vigorously, while effective ways to reach the stated goals are rejected. It is therefore only reasonable to conclude that the "drug war," cast in the harshly punitive form implemented in the past 20 years, is achieving its goals, not failing. What are these goals? A plausible answer is implicit in a comment by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one of the few senators to pay close attention to social statistics, as the latest phase of the "drug war" was declared. By adopting these measures, he observed, "we are choosing to have an intense crime problem concentrated among minorities." Criminologist Michael Tonry concludes that "the war's planners knew exactly what they were doing." What they were doing is, first, getting rid of the "superfluous population," the "disposable people"—"desechables," as they are called in Colombia, where they are eliminated by "social cleansing"; and second, frightening everyone else, not an unimportant task in a period when a domestic form of "structural adjustment" is being imposed, with significant costs for the majority of the populations.<sup>50</sup>

"While the War on Drugs only occasionally serves and more often degrades public health and safety," a well-informed and insightful review concludes, "it regularly serves the interests of private wealth: interests revealed by the pattern of winners and losers, targets and non-targets, well-funded and underfunded," in accord with "the main interests of US foreign and domestic policy generally" and the private sector that "has overriding influence on policy."<sup>51</sup>

One may debate the motivations, but the consequences in the US and abroad seem reasonably clear.

#### Notes:

1. Arms transfers, Adam Isacson and Joy Olson, *Just the Facts: A Citizen's Guide to US Defense and Security Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean* (Latin America Working Group and Center for International Policy, Washington DC, 1999). For background and sources not cited here, see my *Deterring Democracy*, chaps. 4 and 5; and my *World Orders Old and New*, chaps. 1 and 2. See also Javier Giraldo, S.J., *Colombia: The Genocidal Democracy* (Common Courage, 1996). On the correlation, see Lars Schoultz, chap. 10, p. 127, in this volume. For broader confirmation and inquiry, which helps explain the reasons, see Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, *Political Economy of Human Rights*, vol. 1, chap. 2. 1. 1; Herman, *The Real Terror Network* (South End, 1982), 126ff. There is a substantial literature of case studies.

2. Martin Hodgson, "The coca leaf war," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, May/June 2000. Officially, Colombia states that "Plan Colombia will cost a total of \$7.3 billion, of which \$4.2 billion will be financed by the Colombian Government, and \$3.1 billion contributed by the international community," with \$1.08 billion for "a counter-narcotics strategy." Press release, Colombian Embassy, Washington, DC, June 2, 2000. "Intentional ignorance" is the phrase used by human rights monitors Donald Fox and Michael Glennon, commenting on Washington's decision "not to see" the terror it was carrying out, through proxies, in Central America. "Report to the International Human Rights Law Group and the Washington Office on Latin America," Washington DC, April 1985, 21. Also Glennon, "Terrorism and 'intentional ignorance,'" *CSM*, March 20, 1986. See my *Necessary Illusions*, 78.

3. Fiscal years. On US arms transfers, see Tamar Gabelnick, William Hartung, and Jennifer Washburn, *Arming Repression: US Arms Sales to Turkey During the Clinton Administration* (World Policy Institute and Federation of American Scientists, Oct. 1999). For review of US-Turkey

counterinsurgency programs, see my *The New Military Humanism*.

4. Judith Miller, *NYT*, April 30, 2000. The other great achievers in the war against terrorism are Spain (at least, those members of the government who have not yet been jailed for torture and atrocities for their counterterrorism activities) and Algeria, a reference that surpasses comment. The report and review merit much more extensive discussion.

5. Reuters, May 9, 2000 (datelined Ankara); *AFP*, May 26, 2000. *AP*, *BG*, *Chicago Tribune*, *WP* (brief excerpt), May 27, 2000. Anne Komblut, "Congress sees differences on China, Cuba," *BG*, May 27, 2000. Kinzer, "Turkey Reviews the Darkest Hours in Its Painful Past," *NYT*, May 28, 2000. Kinzer, "Turkish Study Finds Torture of Prisoners Is Widespread," *NYT*, June 4, 2000, noting that "the mostly Kurdish population has long complained of bad treatment by police" in the southeast; not quite the full story. On Kinzer's rendition of Turkey's massive ethnic cleansing and terror operations of the '90s, and of the Clinton administration's contribution to them, see my *The New Military Humanism*. For review of his impressive feats of suppression of US atrocities and undermining of diplomacy in his previous post in Nicaragua, see my *Necessary Illusions*.

6. Merely to illustrate, as the April military assaults were being organized, editors of eight newspapers in a Kurdish province were facing possible three-year prison sentences if found guilty of spelling a Kurdish festival *Newroz* instead of *Nevroz*, as in Turkish orthography (*AP Worldstream*, March 25, 2000).

7. Ferit Demer, Reuters, datelined Tunceli, Turkey, April 1, 2000. Chris Morris, *Guardian* (London), April 3, 2000. "Arab League Denounces Turkish Incursion into Iraq," *Mena* (Cairo), April 4, 2000; *Kurdish News Bulletin*, April 1-16, 2000. A US database search found only *AP*, *Los Angeles Times*, April 2, 2000, 326 words. Rubin, US Dept. of State daily press briefing, April 4, 2000; *M2 Presswire*.

8. Federal News Service, Defense Dept. Briefing, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, "Turkey's Importance to 21st Century International Security," Grand Hyatt Hotel, Washington, DC, March 31, 2000; Charles Aiding, "US Praises Key NATO Ally Turkey," Reuters, March 31, 2000.

9. Human Rights Watch, *The Ties That Bind: Colombia and Military-Paramilitary Links*, Feb. 2000. Martin Hodgson, *CSM*, April 26, 2000 (UN Report). State Dept. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 1999 and 1998: 1999 report cited by Hodgson, "coca leaf war." Swedish director quoted by Ana Carrigan, "Dogs of war are loose in Colombia," *Irish Times*, May 6, 2000.

10. Winifred Tate, Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA), Oct. 6, 1999. *Comision Colombiana de Juristas*, "Panorama de los derechos humanos y del derecho humanitario en Colombia: 1999," Sept. 1999; see *Colombia Update* 11:3-4 (Winter/Spring 2000). Bland, "Colombia: Don't forget the lesson of Salvador," *LAT* April 10, 2000. UNICEF, CODHES, cited by Maurice Lemoine, "The Endless Undeclared Civil War," *Le Monde diplomatique*, May 2000.

11. Federal News Service, May 1, 2000, State Dept. Briefing.

12. Lindsay Murdoch, *The Age* (Australia), April 8, 2000; Barry Wain, Asia editor, *WSJ* (Asia edition), April 17, 2000. On East Timor and Kosovo, see my essays "in Retrospect" and "'Green Light' for War Crimes," published in several languages and versions in 1999-2000, updated in my *A New Generation Draws the Line*.

13. *Ibid.*, and *The New Military Humanism* for details and sources.

14. AFL-CIO, "Statement on the Situation of Labor in Colombia and US Policy," Feb. 17, 2000, distributed by WOLA. Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2000* (Human Rights Watch, Dec. 1999).



15. In April 2000, the FARC announced the formation of a new political party, the Bolivarian Movement for a New Colombia, calling for "a new political, social, and economic environment ... that would make the use of arms unnecessary." AP, April 30, 2000, Miami Herald Web site, and Reuters, El Nuevo Herald (Miami), cited in Weekly News Update on the Americas 535 (April 30, 2000). The new party "will, however, remain clandestine for now to prevent its leaders from being slaughtered, said FARC commanders." Vivian Sequera, AP, BG, April 30, 2000.

16. Steven Greenhouse, NYT, March 15, 1994. See my World Orders Old and New for further quotes and comment.

17. Arlene Tickner, general coordinator of the Center for International Studies at the University of the Andes, Bogota, "Colombia: Chronicle of a Crisis Foretold," *Current History*, Feb. 1998.

18. Lars Schoultz, *Human Rights and United States Policy toward Latin America* (Princeton, 1981), 7. Vizquez Carrizosa, and further background, see references of note 1.

19. Michael McClintock, "American Doctrine and Counterinsurgent State Terror," in A. George, ed., *Western State Terrorism* (Polity-Blackwell, 1991), 139; McClintock, *Instruments of Statecraft* (Pantheon, 1992), 222.

20. *Ibid.*, 227.

21. On the programs of the guerrillas, see Andres Cala, "The Enigmatic Guerrilla: FARC's Manuel Marulanda," *Current History*, Feb. 2000; Karen DeYoung, "Colombia's Non-Drug Rebellion," *WP National Weekly*, April 17, 2000. See also the FARC "agenda for negotiations," in Adam Isacson, "The Colombian Dilemma," *International Policy Report* (Washington, DC: Center for International Policy), Feb. 2000.

22. James Wilson, "Rebels tax plan outrages Colombia," *FT*, April 28, 2000. Also Carrigan, *op. cit.*

23. Larry Rohter, "Colombia Agrees to Turn Over Territory to Another Rebel Group," NYT, April 26, 2000; Alma Guillermoprieto, *New York Review*, May 11, 2000. For analysis in more depth, see Lemoine, *op. cit.*, discussing the appeal of the FARC to many peasants and working people who see it as "the army of the poor," and particularly to women, who now constitute one-third of its forces, because of its break from oppressive and degrading practices that are particularly harsh at the depths of poverty and desperation.

24. James Wilson, "Colombia's citizens get the chance to confront rebels," *FT*, April 26, 2000.

25. La Prensa Grafica (San Salvador), April 28, 2000; cited in Weekly News Update on the Americas 535, April 30, 2000; also earlier updates cited there. Kintto Lucas, *Interpress Service* (Quito, Ecuador), March 23, 2000.

26. For background and analysis, see particularly Arnold Chien, Margaret Connors, and Kenneth Fox, "The Drug War in Perspective," in J.Y. Kim, J. Millen, A. Irwin, and J. Gershman, eds., *Dying for Growth* (Institute for Health and Social Justice/Partners in Health, Cambridge MA [Common Courage, 2000]).

27. General Accounting Office, *Drug Control: Narcotics Threat from Colombia Continues to Grow*, June 1999.

28. Alan Feuer, "US Colonel Is Implicated in Drug Case," NYT, April 4, 2000.

29. John Donnelly, BG, March 9, 2000. See "Paramilitary Leader Goes Public," *Latinamerica Press* (Peru), March 20, 2000. 30. DeYoung, "Colombia's Non-Drug Rebellion."

31. Cala, "Enigmatic Guerrilla." Ricardo Vargas Meza, *The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Illicit Drug Trade*

(Accion Andina [Bolivia], TNI [Netherlands], WOLA [Washington, DC]), June 1999.

32. *Ibid.* Also Vargas, "Drug Cultivation, Fumigation, and the Conflict in Colombia" (TNI and Accion Andina Colombia), Oct. 1999; Hodgson, "coca leaf war." Also Larry Rohter, "Colombia Tries, Yet Cocaine Thrives," NYT, Nov. 20, 1999, on opposition by the Colombian government and farmers to the US insistence on crop-destruction programs rather than the crop-substitution programs they prefer. On current plans for the use of biological in addition to the usual chemical weapons, see "UN to Unleash Biowar Against Colombian Cocaine Plant," AFP, March 8, 2000, reporting an article in the British journal *New Scientist* (March 9, 2000) on a plan funded by the US and UN to conduct open field trials of a fungus (*Fusarium oxysporum*) so far tested only in US government greenhouses. "The biowar tactic is being considered because of the failure of crime busters to stamp out the coca crop," AFP reports. Farmers in Peru claim that a fungus that has sharply reduced coca production there "has also mutated and is killing many traditional crops, including bananas, cacao, coffee, corn, lemon grass, papaya, and yucca," but "US government officials insist that charges that they are connected in some way to the fungus are groundless." Eric Lyman, "US Accused of Creating Blight Killing Coca Plants and Harming Other Crops," *San Francisco Chronicle*, Nov. 4, 1999.

33. Walter LaFeber, "The Alliances in Retrospect," in A. Maguire and J.W. Brown, eds., *Bordering on Trouble: Resources and Politics in Latin America* (Adler & Adler, 1986). Joseph Treaster, "Coffee Impasse Imperils Colombia's Drug Fight," NYT, Sept. 24, 1988. On Food for Peace and the effects of US "export subsidies" and on the use of counterpart funds, see William Borden, *The Pacific Alliance: United States Foreign Economic Policy and Japanese Trade Recovery, 1947-1955* (Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 182C. For more general information, see Tim Barry and Deb Preusch, *The Soft War* (Grove, 1988). On the background, see also Chien et al., "The Drug War in Perspective," in *Dying for Growth*.

34. Susan Strange, *Mad Money: When Markets Outgrow Governments* (Univ. of Michigan, 1998), 127.

35. See chap. 10, in this volume.

36. Tim Weiner, "Congress Agrees to \$7.1 Billion in Farm Aid," NYT April 14, 2000; Nicolas Kristof, "As Life for Family Farmers Worsens, the Toughest Withers," NYT, April 2, 2000; Laurent Belsie, "Collapse of Free-Market Farm Economy?," CSM, March 23, 2000. For detail and informative analysis, see National Farmers Union (Saskatoon, SK, Canada), *The Farm Crisis, EU Subsidies, and Agribusiness Market Power*, report presented to Canadian Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, Ottawa, Feb. 17, 2000.

37. One current illustration is the reaction to the Declaration of the South Summit in the Havana meeting of April 2000. It condemned the Western-instituted foals of "globalization" and called for "an international economic system which will be just and democratic," emphasizing the "right to development" that the US rejects, also condemning "the so-called 'right' of humanitarian intervention" and any military or economic intervention to prevent countries from developing their own "political, economic, social, and cultural systems," with many specific charges and proposals. As is customary, the declaration of countries accounting for 80 percent of the world's population was unreported and ignored.

38. Adam Isacson, "Getting in Deeper," Center for International Policy, *International Policy Report* (Feb. 2000); Linda Robinson, *World Policy Journal* (Winter 1999-2000); Cala, "Enigmatic Guerrilla." Larry Rohter, NYT, Nov. 20, 1999, reporting the "dismay" of Colombian officials, who are overruled; Rohter, "To Colombians, Drug War Is Toxic Foe," NYT, May 1, 2000, on the effects of spraying in violation of regulations (applied in the US), and US Embassy denials. See note 32.



39. Gwen Robinson and James Wilson, FT, March 30, 2000; Michael Isikoff, Gregory Visdca, Steven Ambrus, "The Other Drug War," Newsweek, April 3, 2000.

40. AP, NYT, April 10, 2000; Peter McFarren, AP, BG, April 10, 2000; Reuters, AP, April 18, 2000; Richard Lapper, "Anger in the Andes," FT, April 26, 2000; Francis McDonagh, National Catholic Reporter, April 28, 2000.

41. Jim Schultz, The Democracy Center, Bogota, April 9, 2000; San Jose Mercury News, April 8, 2000; Democracy Center, April 13, 2000; Pacific News Service, April 13, 2000; San Francisco Examiner, April 19, 2000; In These Times, May 15, 2000. 42. Kirk Semple, "Antidrug Efforts Sowing Fear in Colombia," BG, April 10, 2000.

43. Alvin Winder, Ted Chen, and William Mfuko, "Influence of American Tobacco Imports on Smoking Rates Among Women and Youth in Asia," International Quarterly of Community Health Education 14:4 (1993-94), 345-59; Chen and Winder, "APACT: Its Organization and Impact on Resistance to US Tobacco Imperialism," International Quarterly of Community Health Education 12:1 (1991-92), 59-67. See also chap. 10, p. 150, in this volume. On the USTR hearings that forced Asian countries to open their doors to US lethal drugs and aggressive advertising at exactly the time when George Bush announced the new "drug war," and the astonishing media reaction to these two simultaneous events, see my Detering Democracy, chap. 4. On Colombian vs. US deaths, see Peter Boume, World Development Forum 6 (June 1988), cited by Joyce Millen and Timothy Holtz, "Transnational Corporations and the Health of the Poor," in Kim et al., Dying for Growth.

44. Stephen Bezruchka, "Is globalization dangerous to our health?," Western Journal of Medicine 172:332-334, May 2000.

45. Colin Nickerson, "A Northern Border Menace," BG, April 26, 2000. UN International Drug Control Programme, World Drug Report (Oxford, 1997). See my Detering Democracy for some of the interesting record on banks and chemical corporations, and Washington's reaction.

46. Linda Greenhouse, "Excerpts From [Supreme Court] Opinions," NYT, March 22, 2000. Peto, see chap. 10, note 94, in this volume.

47. John Donnelly, BG, March 22, 2000.

48. Dissenting Views of Hon. Nancy Pelosi and Hon. David Obey in House Committee Report 106-521 on H.R. 3908, March 14, 2000, distributed by WOLA.

49. John Donnelly, BG, Feb. 21, 2000.

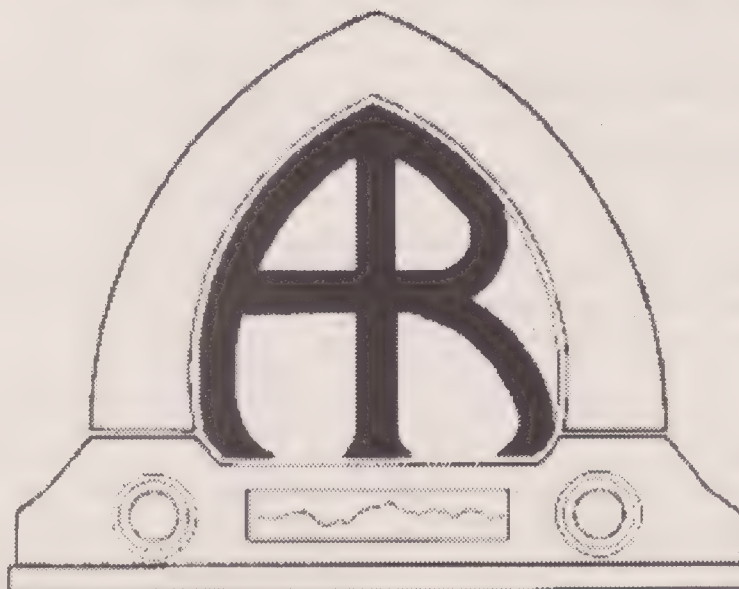
50. Michael Tonry, Malign Neglect: Race, Crime, and Punishment in America (Oxford, 1995). See Juan Pablo Ordonez, No Human Being Is Disposable (Columbia Human Rights Committee, Washington, DC, 1995). Ordonez is another human rights activist who was compelled to flee the

country under death threats. On policy consequences for the US population, see Marc and Marque-Luisa Miringoff, The Social Health of the Nation (Oxford, 1999), the latest Index of Social Health report of the Fordham Institute for Innovation in Social Policy, which monitors social indicators (as is done by government bodies in other industrial countries). Their most striking conclusion is that social indicators tracked GDP closely until the mid-1970s, and have since declined, leaving the US below the level of 1959, in what they call a "social recession." The shift coincides with the onset of official "globalization" and the domestic version of selective "neoliberal reforms."

51. Chien et al., "The Drug War in Perspective," in Kim et al., Dying for Growth. On the criminal justice system past and present, see Randall Shelden, Controlling the Dangerous Classes: A Critical Introduction to the History of Criminal Justice (Allyn and Bacon, forthcoming).

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## **ADVOCATING AGAINST THE IDEAL Zine for Women Who Refuse**

#1 (PO Box 2346, Sioux City, IA 51106; [www.geocities.com/susansite](http://www.geocities.com/susansite)) is 26-pages worth of pretty type faces. *Advocating against the Ideal* is a feminist zine that makes clear exactly why liberal feminists need to read more radical literature. This issue's "highlights" include rants about being criticized for not wearing ■ dress and the probing question as to why there isn't a "Mr." America contest. Unfortunately, this zine's handful of vacant critiques about sexism are drawn from the surface issues of high heels and diets culled from women's magazines. Readers interested in a dialogue about the real causes of misogyny should look elsewhere. Send \$1 for Issue #1, \$2 for following issues. Cash only. [KM]

## **THE AMERICAN DISSIDENT A Literary Review of Dissident Poetry and Essays**

#3/Fall 2000 - Winter 2001 (1837 Main St., Concord,

MA 01742-3811; e-mail: [enmarge@hotmail.com](mailto:enmarge@hotmail.com); web: [members.aol.com/enmarge.page.html](http://members.aol.com/enmarge.page.html)) is a 48-page biannual zine of political poetry, rants, and cartoons. The poetry is a mixed bag, but most of it is at least interesting. I thought the bios for each writer were often more interesting than their poetry. I particularly liked Michael Ceraolo's two "essays on news reports." It's encouraging to see that somebody is at least trying to show that the literary arts can be political. \$14 for 2 issues. [CM]

## **ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST REVIEW**

#30/Winter 2000-2001 (POB 2824, Champaign, IL 61825; e-mail: [asr@labourstart.zzn.net](mailto:asr@labourstart.zzn.net)) is a quarterly 38-page magazine about anarcho-syndicalism and the radical labor movement. The cover story is titled "Anarcho-Syndicalism versus Insurrectionism," which provides an anarcho-syndicalist on this minor tendency of anarchism dubbed "insurrectionism." This tendency, where it isn't uncommon to hear about anarchists robbing banks or blowing up car dealerships, can be found in Italy and Greece. The illegalists are clearly anarchists, so it's a shame to see yet another so-called revolutionary organization (the Spanish CNT) distancing itself from this tendency. Other feature articles in this issue include "General Strike in Serbia," "The Rebirth of French Anarcho-Syndicalism," and "35-hour Week: lower incomes and more work." Recommended. \$15 for 4 issues [CM]

## **ANY TIME NOW**

### **Anarchist-Decentralist Newsletter**

#11/Fall 2000 (Affinity Place, Argenta, B.C. V0G 1B0, Canada; web site: <http://sites.netscape.net/atnzine/>; e-mail: [dickm11@excite.com](mailto:dickm11@excite.com)) is a 6-page discussion zine for libertarian "moderation." This issue includes another quick criticism of Noam Chomsky's defenses of late of government as instrument of the popular will, a review of the editor's "Road to Fascism" pamphlet by Dick Martin, and reviews of a few assorted anarchist periodicals. Subscriptions are \$1/issue.

## **ARSENAL**

### **A Magazine of Anarchist Strategy and Culture**

#2 Fall 2000 (1573 N. Milwaukee Ave. PMB #420 Chicago, IL 60647; e-mail: [arsenal@wwa.com](mailto:arsenal@wwa.com)) is a superbly produced and thought-provoking journal of anarchist theory and practice. This issue includes a history and analysis of the Philadelphian anarchists' success in maintaining a very public presence in their city; a discussion of the difficulties the band Chumbawumba face when exploiting market capitalism to spread their politics (the distinctions drawn between contributing to a subculture as opposed to an anarchist culture are particularly interesting); illustrations by Chicago artist Josh

MacPhee protesting the industrialization of the human spirit; an article on "Bringing the Struggle Home" detailing what anarchists can learn from the strategies of the Zapatistas; and "A Look at Eugene's Anarchists" by Laura Buddendeck. The only stinker is "Anarchists in the Neighbourhood" by Brian Dominick, in which theoretical confusion and the author's own hubris come together in a call to abandon anarchism in favour of "community work." And now a message from the reviewer, who's seen a few anarchists deteriorate into government-grant fed reformist social workers: how this article made it past the editorial board of a journal like Arsenal is beyond me. That said, this issue is highly recommended. \$4 [AA]

## **THE BAD DAYS WILL END!**

# 3/Fall 2000 (Merrymount Publications PO Box 441597 Somerville, MA 02144) is a bulletin advocating libertarian communism. This issue includes a book review by historian Michael Siedman, a turgid article on "The Necessity and Impossibility of Anti-Activism" by J. Kellstadt (who cribbs from anarchist Alfredo Bonanno's *The Anarchist Tension*), a piece first published in 1972 called "The Work of Ideology" (gotta love that!) and "Back to the Situationist International" by Gilles Dauvé. A carping cartoon asserting anarchists "lack analysis" rounds out this grim example of Marxist theory-wrestling. \$2.00 per issue. [AA]

## **BLINK CULTURE SCHLOCK**

### **'toons from Japan'**

#12 (239 Harvard Ave #1, Allston, MA, 02134) Having just endured a beginner's Japanese course, I could appreciate Steve Degregorio's observations about some of the stranger elements to be found in Japanese culture and language, which are expressed in 14 pages worth of short panel cartoons. Generally, the jokes revolve around a couple of American kids teaching English in Japan. My fave: "you know you've been in Japan too long when you drop all particles when talking..." But that should also give you an idea of what you're in for. If the above quip isn't entirely meaningless to you and you find jokes about "Gaijin" your bag, than Blink could be worth a perusal. \$1.50 or trade. (KM)

## **BLU**

#10 (POB 903, 2023 Route 213, Rifton, NY 12471-0903; e-mail: [pete@blumag.org](mailto:pete@blumag.org); web: [www.blumag.com](http://www.blumag.com)) is an amazing 66-page magazine of revolutionary politics and culture which comes with a cool CD. The theme of this issue is "Global Guerillas," which means that the reader can learn about gang organizing, playahating, martial arts and hip hop, Frantz Fanon, hackers and phreakers, women Zapatistas, hip hop in South Africa and much more. The cultural mix includes an



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interview with John Trudell, color pictures of various hip hop and rock steady shows, graffiti art, the art of tattooing, and a generous helping of reviews. This is all done in a visual style explosion that makes *Blu* one of the most dynamic political magazines around. The CD contains an eclectic mix of political funk and hip hop, including songs from Aztlan Underground, Arsonists, Zion I, Fun'da'mental, and Stewy Nuke'em. \$27 for 6 issues and 6 CDs [CM]

#### BROKEN PENCIL

#13/Summer 2000 (PO Box 203, Stn. P, Toronto, ON, Canada, M5S 2S7; web: [www.brokenpencil.com](http://www.brokenpencil.com)) is a 98-page magazine that reviews Canadian zines and covers the alternative press from a Canadian viewpoint. In a time when so much American culture is exported to Canada, perhaps it is time for American folks to check out what the Canadian alternative press has to offer. This magazine is a good start, because it mixes scads of zine reviews with articles and excerpts from zines. In this issue, Skot Deeming writes "A History of the small town zine scene," Emily Pohl-Weary contributes an excellent article titled "Postering Public Space," and Kevin Jagernauth profiles Jean Smith, an ex-Riot Grrrl on the Kill Rock Stars record label. \$4.95 / \$12 for 3 issues [CM]

#### THE BULLETIN OF THE ATOMIC SCIENTISTS

Vol. 56, #6 (6042 South Kimbark Ave., Chicago, IL 60637-2806; web: [www.thebulletin.org](http://www.thebulletin.org)) is a 74-page bimonthly magazine on peace, international relations, foreign policy, nuclear power, and nuclear weapons. The Bulletin is most famous for its "clock" which visually depicts how close the world is to nuclear disaster. In "The limits of coercion," David Cortright and George A. Lopez examine the history of the U.N. mission to disarm Saddam Hussein. They explain that despite the demise of the UNSCOM inspection force in 1998, a great deal of disarmament was accomplished over the course of the 90s. This is also a special issue on "Government Secrecy." Steven Aftergood looks at the current state of U.S. government secrecy, especially in light of recent leaks such as the infamous Wen Ho Lee case. James P. Thomas recounts his experiences trying to get secrets about the Hanford installation. Peter J. Westwick writes about the history of nuclear secrecy and Howard Morland asks "What's left to protect?" \$28 for one year. [CM]

#### BURGER DUDE

(Buy Books On the Web.com; 862 West Lancaster Ave. Bryn Mawr, PA 19010-3222)- Service workers of the world, unite. If you haven't managed to slip Marx's Capital into your bedside reading yet, the well-produced, 48-page Burger Dude will suffice. Stone's short, clipped sentences initially trick readers into thinking the novel is a simplistic, goofy

parody when in fact Burger Dude is actually a sustained critique of capitalism. Stone uses his main character Ray, to examine the insidious pitfalls of the free market we can so easily slide into. A hapless hippie c. 1971 at the start of the novelette, all Ray wants is a car to take him to the beach. However, Ray's chosen path soon becomes a life of wage-slavery to the burger chain that employs him, as he miserably slogs through the decades under the not-so-watchful eye of his dimwit boss. Burger Dude's ending is wacky, culminating in Ray's psychotic break from reality; his success at becoming the very thing he loathes is equally unconvincing, but this aside, Stone's work is entertaining and recommended. \$9.95. [KM]



#### CLASS WAR

No. 80/Autumn 2000 (PO Box 467 London E8 3QX) is the tabloid-style journal of the anarchist class war federation in England. The cover illustration, "time to pour oil on troubled waters," features laughing firemen spraying oil from a petrol truck onto flaming parliament buildings. A regular column, "Doing the Business," covers direct action around the United Kingdom. Analysis of the recent UK truckers' strike and a discussion of May Day 2000 events in London demonstrates Class War still has its fingers on the pulse of rebellion. Well worth the price at approximately \$3 per issue (CW is carried by many alternative info shops in the US and Canada). To subscribe send £ 20 for 5 issues. Make checks out to London Class War. [AA]

#### CONDUIT

##### Big Bang: When Science and Poetry Collide

#9/Fall 2000 (510 Eight Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413; e-mail: [conduit@bitstream.net](mailto:conduit@bitstream.net)) is a 72-page journal of prose and poetry. The poetry here is of better quality than most poetry zines, although the art is limited and mostly boring. This issue is loosely arranged around science themes: statistics, mathematics, political science, and geometry. Needless to say, some of the poems fit into these themes, while most do not. Includes an interview with Chet Raymo, who is a physics and astronomy professor who writes poetry. \$11 for 2 issues. [CM]

#### CONFLUENCE

Winter 2001 (POB 63232, St. Louis, MO 63163; e-mail: [mkbhnerth@hotmail.com](mailto:mkbhnerth@hotmail.com)) is a 16-page tabloid of social & environmental news for the Mississippi River Valley and Ozark bioregion, but centered on St. Louis concerns. This issue includes cover stories on the Missouri Prison Labor Union started by Jerome White-Bey and on the "Death Penalty: Justice or Vengeance?" Subscriptions are \$20-\$25/year (4 issues). [JM]

#### DISCUSSION BULLETIN

#101/May-June 2000 through #105/Jan.-Feb. 2001 (POB 1564, Grand Rapids, MI. 49501) is a 32-page assortment of letters and reprinted articles primarily from the anti-market, non-statist radical milieu. Each issue usually includes several ongoing debates over the meanings of communism, Marxism, unionism, democracy and revolution, with some occasionally interesting and enlightening comments. The Jan.-Feb. issue includes part one of John Spritzler's worthwhile critique "Facing History: How Working Class Germans Fought the Nazis and how Liberal Foundations Lie about It." Always wide open to participation from readers who identify with this political sector. Subscriptions are \$3/year (6 issues).

#### EARTH FIRST!

December-January, 2001 (PO Box 1415 Eugene, OR 97440) is a must-read journal dedicated to the defence of all life on this planet. This issue includes an account of the spirited demonstrations in the Czech Republic that rocked the IMF/World Bank and the successful disruption of World Economic Forum meetings in Melbourne, Australia last fall. There is also a moving tribute to David R. Brower, the inspirational activist who never compromised in his efforts to push grassroots environmentalism "hard left," as it were. Updates on new and ongoing campaigns to stop the destruction of wilderness and the creatures who inhabit it make for worthwhile reading. In keeping with the times we live in there is a special insert, "fire in the eyes," which discusses the police use of toxic



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chemicals to keep the rabble in line... hey, that's you!  
Highly recommended. 3.50 US/\$4.00 Can. [AA]

### THE EAST VILLAGE INKY

#10 (122 Dean St, Brooklyn, NY 11201, e-mail: [inky@erols.com](mailto:inky@erols.com)) is a funky, hand-lettered, quarterly, small-format (4"x 5.5") zine recording the daily life (and the imagination) of a mother with a three-year-old and an infant and a fixation on Asian cultures. This issue includes a search for an ideal preschool, "Advice to Fathers," and an account of the Xmas holidays. Sample copies are \$2; subscriptions are \$8/4 issues. [JM]

### EVERYONE'S BACKYARD

Vol. 18, No.3. (Center for Health, Environment and Justice, Inc. 150 S. Washington St., Suite 300, P.O. Box 6806, Falls Church, VA 22040; web: [www.chej.org](http://www.chej.org)) is a 32-page, NGO produced magazine about environmental justice. E.B is heavily focused on dioxin, something they address in an editorial in this particular issue. Features include a report on the People's Dioxin Action Summit held in Berkeley in August of last year. Other features of note include the "Corporate Corner," a needed "outing" of the worst corporate crooks; the top ten generators of toxic pollutants; and the results from the Campaign for Cleaner Corporations survey. Also includes an action line, a legal corner and

resources list. No price listed. [KM]

### EXTRA!

Vol.14.#1/Jan.-Feb. 2001 (Subscription Services, POB 170, Congers, NY 10920-9930; [www.fair.org](http://www.fair.org)) is the 32-page bimonthly magazine of FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting), a "national media watch group that offers well-documented criticism of media bias and censorship" published from a left-liberal perspective. The Jan.-Feb. issue features criticisms of the mainstream media's U.S. election coverage last year, including media fixations on Gore's "populism" and Ralph Nader as spoiler, as well as the exit-poll errors during election day. The issue also features an important report on the Palestinian uprising revealing that it has become nearly taboo for mainstream media to name the Israeli subjugation of the occupied territories an "occupation." Always recommended as an antidote to pervasive media biases. Subscriptions are now \$21/year (including the bimonthly newsletter, EXTRA! Update). [JM]

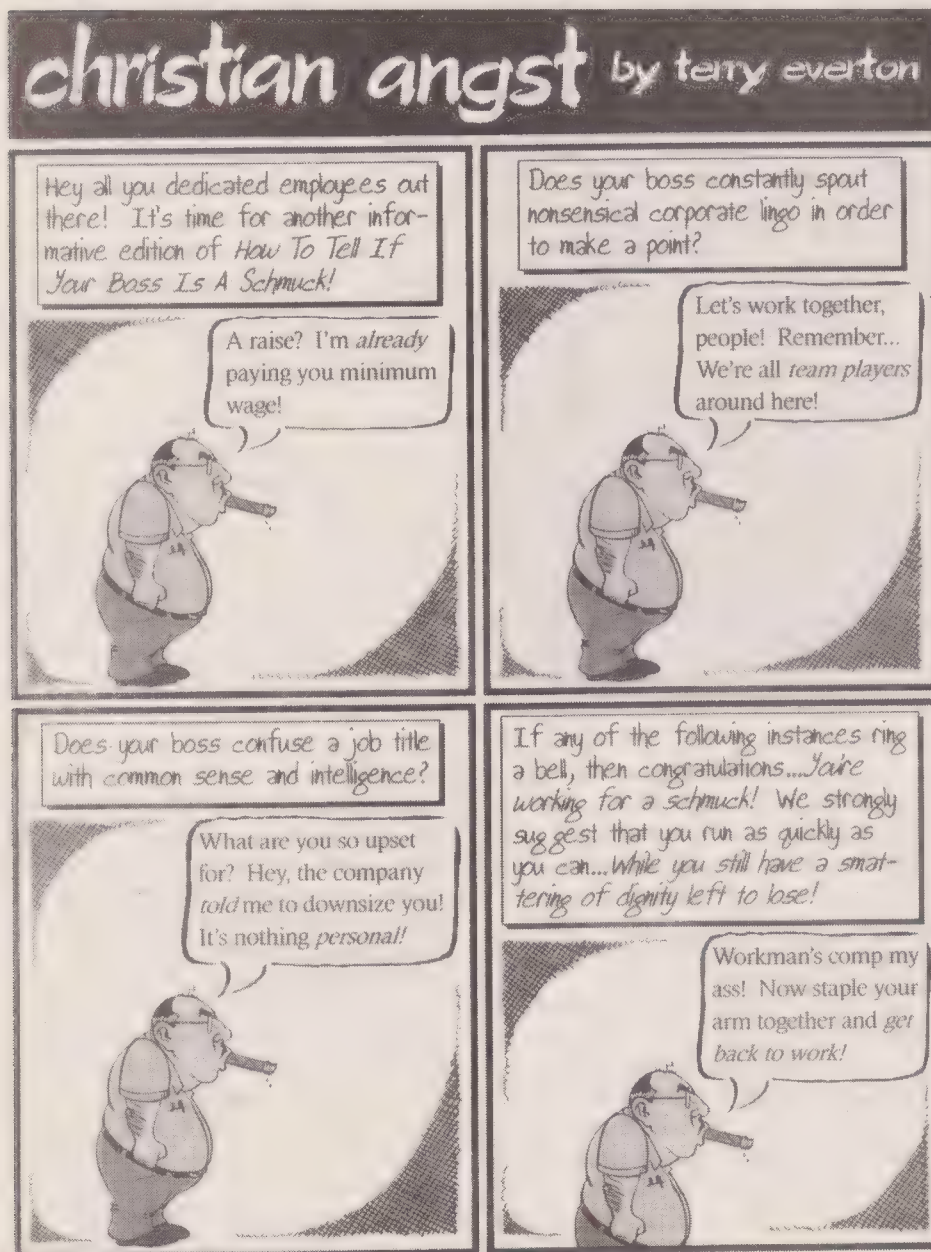
### FALL OF AMERICA

(Left Bank: 1004 Turner Way E., Seattle 98112) is a slow though well-intentioned 128-page novel about a group of train-hopping, slacker-types from California, caught off-guard by a sweeping fascist state spreading across the U.S. The first half of the novel is taken up with the boring lives of the slackers, as they ruminate on the corporate control of everything, the evils of conformity and their own stream-of consciousness "thots." Given that Fall of America is likely to only be picked up by those already politically aware, these fictional speeches not only preach to the converted but are far too didactic. Robnoxious is not a bad writer, and the novel does pick up towards the end (after a large protest goes wrong and martial law is declared), but writing purely for the sake of communicating politics is never a good idea - Ayn Rand comes to mind. \$2. [KM]

### FREEDOM

#### Anarchist Fortnightly

Vol.61.#5 through Vol.61.#24/Dec. 16, 2000 (84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX, England) is a long-running 8-page tabloid of anarchist news and comment covering international, as well as British, social struggles. The December 16th issue includes commentary on the Florida election farce in the US, and the continuing success of the coverage of the Bloody Sunday 1972 murders of unarmed protesters by the British armed forces in Northern Ireland. Still the most frequently appearing anarchist periodical in English. North American subscriptions are £22/year (24 issues). [JM]





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#### GIRLFRIENDS

Vol.7,#8/Feb. 2001 (3415 Cesar Chavez St., Suite 101, San Francisco, CA 94110; [www.girlfriendsmag.com](http://www.girlfriendsmag.com)) is a super-glossy, colorful, 48-page advertising-saturated, magazine of "Lesbian Culture, Politics, and Entertainment." The February "sex" issue covers the Alabama dildo ban, the current range of lesbian "Sex Options" (Carol Queen), and "The Bisexual Within" (Jenny Weiss), along with an interview with Michelle Tea. Single copies are \$4.95; subscriptions are \$29.95/year. [JM]

#### GRASSROOTS ECONOMIC ORGANIZING NEWSLETTER

#41/42/Summer 2000 (177 Kiles Road, Stillwater, PA 17878; web: [www.geonewsletter.org](http://www.geonewsletter.org)) - GEO's mandate is to "provide news and a bi-monthly forum" around alternative economic enterprises. This 22- page issue was about co-operatives in places as varied as Hungary, Mexico, Bosnia, Africa and Cuba, with an editorial about the need to buy co-op and boycott multinationals. GEO focuses on both fair trade and organics, with strong emphasis on the mechanics and implementation of co-operation, period. The journal doesn't water anything down and is at times a little dry, but don't let that scare you away. They are probably the only journal besides Dollars and Sense to tackle alternative economics in a thorough manner. Includes book reviews. \$3.50 U.S./4.75 Canada. (KM)

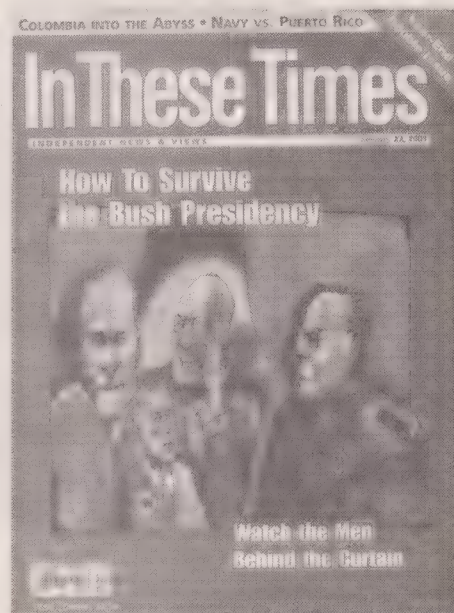
#### GREEN ANARCHY

No. 3/Winter 2000 (PO Box 11331 Eugene, OR 97440) is a nicely put together journal of anarchist politics. This issue includes an insert with a thoughtful, well-reasoned outline of the GA perspective on what ills the world. Several first-hand reports cover major demonstrations against corporate/state abuse from around the world (Bolivia, for example). If you are looking for news on radical events written by the people who make them happen, look no further. A listing of actions against biotech operations and the exploitation of animals suggests we aren't all laying down and playing dead in the face of capitalism's outrages. A constructive and inspiring article on organic gardening and community building rounds out the issue. Highly recommended. \$2 US/\$3 Can. [AA]

#### GUIDE DU PLOTZ: PARIS

#14/undated (Barbara, P.O. Box 819 Stuyvesant Station, New York City, 10009) is a witty, 23- page guide to Paris, sans pretension. As the zine's intrepid creator says so aptly in her "pre-prologue," "get your café noir...and settle your candy ass down for a good long read of Plotz 14..." The style is biting, and the pace is quick, with paragraphs placed under headings such as "How you say —

bitch — en Francais" and "Tack is Tack is Tack is Tack." The format is also very clever, done up as a 50's era travel guide and illustrated with simple yet stylish graphics. Although very little actually happens during the author's trip to Paris she is nonetheless a gifted storyteller and can embellish like no one else. Narrations such as "Secret Agent Plotz-O" detail attempts at leaving Plotz stickers in trendy shops in both England and France ("Some people pack Dramamine when they go away on trips. Me? I pack homemade Plotz stickers of an afro-clad woman with Jewish stars in her eyes.") Two other little tidbits round out the Guide Du Plotz, "The Shame on Jew series: The sad, sick tale of Balthus" (a Parisian artist into denying he was Jewish); and "Out the French Jews!." Very funny, very well written and very recommended! \$2 plus 2



stamps. Back issues available for \$1 plus 2 stamps. Cash only. (KM)

#### GUINEA PIG ZERO

A Journal for Human Research Subjects  
#8 November, 2000 (GPZ PO Box 42531 Philadelphia, PA 19101; e-mail: [gpzero@netaxs.com](mailto:gpzero@netaxs.com); web: <http://hop.to/guineapigzero>) is a must-read journal for anyone who wants the straight goods on government-sponsored experiments, industrial capitalist medicine and the commercial drug industry. The view is from the inside as editor Bob Helms, human guinea pig for hire with an investigative snout, documents the malpractices of characters like Dr Orne, a recently-deceased University of Pennsylvania CIA operative and psychiatrist who specialized in still-classified research on involuntary human subjects (unwitting

prisoners, military personal and the like). This issue also includes a history of the life and death of Jesse Gelsinger, a young man who was suckered into participating in a highly dangerous test and died at the hands of company doctors working for Human Gene Therapy and Genovo, Inc. There are also report cards on drug testing outfits for those brave readers who practice Helms' trade. Each issue comes with a rich peppering of hilarious illustrations, tales from history ("The Skeletons in Ben Franklin's Closet"), short stories and witty Aphorisms. Highly recommended. Send checks payable to R. Helms. Individuals: \$5 per copy, \$15 for a 4-issue subscription. Institutions: \$8 per copy, \$24 for a 4-issue subscription. [AA]

#### HARBINGER

A Mouthpiece of the CrimethInc. Underground  
#3 (CrimethInc. HQ, 2695 Rangewood Dr., Atlanta, GA 30345; web: [www.crimethinc.com](http://www.crimethinc.com)) is a 20-page newspaper of what could be described as Situationism updated for the 21st century. This is probably one of the more innovative political newspapers to come along recently. Instead of telling you why you should believe Ideology X or pay attention to a strike in Korea, the folks involved in this project are more interested in getting the reader to open their mind about the politics of everyday life. Highly recommended. [CM]

#### HARPER'S

Vol.302,#1809/Feb. 2001 (Subscription Dept., POB-7511, Red Oak, IA 51591-0511) is a slick, 92-page monthly edited and produced with an understated, literate style that makes it one of the best of all mainstream US magazines. Although not an alternative magazine itself, it is one of the few well established periodicals to include reprints from alternative press titles as well as a wide variety of other, often unusual, sources. This issue is extremely notable (and is included in this listing) for its cover story, "The Case Against Henry Kissinger, Part 1: The Making of a War Criminal" by Christopher Hitchens. This is a crucially important mainstream media event. The taboo against naming the men and women at the pinnacles of US power and wealth as war criminals must be broken before they will ever begin to fear facing any justice for their manifold crimes against humanity. Harper's has made an important start by naming Henry Kissinger as someone who, by his consciously murderous orders (in Vietnam, Chile and elsewhere), fully deserves to be hung from the neck until dead. The cover price is now \$4.95; subscriptions remain \$21/year. [JM]

#### HOPE DANCE

#24/September/October 2000 (P.O. Box 15609, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. [hopedance@aol.com](mailto:hopedance@aol.com)) is an



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excellent 71-page issue on urban sprawl, sustainable communities (such as the Oak Creek Commons Co-housing group in Paso Robles, CA) and California's SOAR (Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources) initiative. Packed with information, interviews, and first-rate features, this issue also has articles on pesticides and a number of columns devoted to topics such as the WTO; health; parenting; local eco-political news; and disarmament. A substantial book reviews section rounds out the magazine. One downside: the large format is financed through lots and lots of ads. Although targeted to California residents, *Hope Dance* is good reading for anyone and everyone. \$10 for six issues. (KM)

#### IDS INSIGHTS

Vol.1, #2/Nov. 2000 (IDS, 177 East 87th St, Suite 501, New York, NY 10128) is the 12-page newsletter of the Institute for Democracy Studies, presenting accounts of its latest investigations into rightwing, anti-abortion, anti-feminist organizing in the U.S. This issue includes quick descriptions of the Federalist Society, Priests for Life and the National Pro-Life Religious Council and their latest programs. Subscriptions are \$25/4 issues. [JM]

#### INSURGENT

Vol.12, #2/November 2000 (Erb Memorial Union, Suite One, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-1228) is a 24-page radical newspaper serving that hotbed of radicalism: Eugene-Springfield, Oregon. In the local news department, several University of Oregon students were arrested at the School of the Americas protest, the legal situation is updated for local activists Free and Critter (charged with arson), activists protested Staples, and the Portland City Council is kissing the FBI's ass. Andrew X contributes a provocative essay titled "Give Up Activism," which should ruffle a few feathers. This issue also includes a special pull-out section on animal liberation, veganism, and the Animal Liberation Front. Recommended. \$15 for a subscription. [CM]

#### IN THESE TIMES

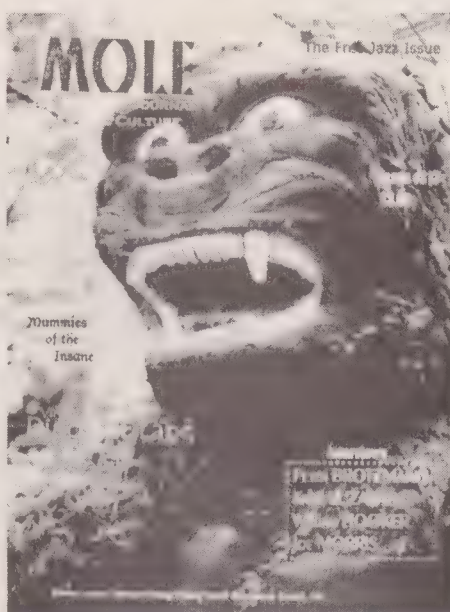
Vol.25, #4-5/Jan. 22, '01 (Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647; web: [www.inthesetimes.com](http://www.inthesetimes.com); e-mail: [itt@inthesetimes.com](mailto:itt@inthesetimes.com)) is a professionally-produced, 30-page fortnightly "alternative newsmagazine" providing a left-liberal perspective on major national and international news stories in a timely manner—impossible for periodicals appearing less frequently. The January 22nd issue includes criticism of the Supreme Court's election of George W. Bush ("Voting Wrongs" by Sam Muwakkil) and the incoming administration ("Uncle Tom's Cabinet?" by Barbara Ransby & Cheryl Harris), along with

another exposé of the Navy's devastation of Vieques in "Anchors Away" by Juan Gonzalez, and an update on the disintegration of the peace process in Colombia by Ana Carrigan. Subscriptions are now \$36.95/year (26 issues). [JM]

#### LOVING MORE

##### New Models for Relationships

#23/Fall 2000 (PO Box 4358, Boulder, CO 80306; e-mail: [brett@lovemore.com](mailto:brett@lovemore.com); web: [www.lovemore.com](http://www.lovemore.com)) is a 42-page quarterly magazine devoted to the exploration of alternative relationships. This issue includes an interview with Brad Blanton, author of the book *Practicing Radical*



Honesty. Janet Kira Lessin contributes "The Perils and Pearls of Polyamory." The strength of this magazine rests on the personal accounts of alternative sexuality that are contributed by readers. These accounts take the ideas of alternative sexuality into the practical realm, thus providing a guide for those who are tired of traditional relationships. \$30 for a one year membership. [CM]

#### MOLE

##### An Informal Journal of Panic Culture

#13/undated (POB 2482, Merrifield, VA 22116; web: [www.patriot.net/users/playhaus/mile.html](http://www.patriot.net/users/playhaus/mile.html)) is an irregularly produced 48-page newsprint zine which often digs into various aspects of underground culture. This particular issue is focused on jazz music featuring interviews with drummer William Hooker, avant-jazz guitarist Joe Morris, Kahil El'Zabar and Peter Brotzmann. There's also an extensive music and book review section. Send \$3 for a sample copy. [TW]

#### MONSTRESS

#2 (P.O. Box 576, Union City NJ 07087; e-mail: [evonderheid@hotmail.com](mailto:evonderheid@hotmail.com)) is a sweet and well-written, 14-page "women-oriented" zine (though not exclusively that). I enjoyed the article on heavy foreign coins (though being from Canada I won't be able to ditch my weighty currency via any of Erica Vonderheid's clever tips). Other articles include the joys of sauerkraut; why you could live at the Pittsburgh airport; the most eclectic review section I've ever seen (Patsy Cline, the Best of Meat Loaf, and White Rabbit candies). Best feature: the Good Advice on the back page re: "On the First Date". (If you are considering asking "the young man across from you at the romantic candlelit table" if he's done time—don't do it). \$10 or trade. (KM)

#### MUSELETTER

#107/Dec. 2000 & #108/Jan. 2001 (Richard Heinberg, 1604 Jennings Ave., Santa Rosa, CA. 95401; e-mail: [rheinberg@igc.org](mailto:rheinberg@igc.org); web site: [www.museletter.com/museletter/](http://www.museletter.com/museletter/)) is a readable and enjoyable 4-page monthly comment zine "of cultural renewal." Each issue includes one substantial essay or review by publisher Richard Heinberg, author of the book *Memories and Visions of Paradise: Exploring the Universal Myth of a Lost Golden Age*. The December issue is an exception to the rule, including short comments on the "Aftermath of the Coup" (the Supreme Court's election of George W. Bush) and a couple "appreciations" of anthropologists influential for the publisher. The January issue covers "Biotechnology & the Fate of the Soul" (on whether or not to "restrain" development of gene technology). Subscriptions are still \$15/year. [JM]

#### NEWS & LETTERS

Vol.45, #10/December 2000 (36 S. Wabash, Room 1440, Chicago, IL 60603) is a 12-page newspaper published by an organization of Marxist-Humanists. Feature articles focus on the recent U.S. elections, the student movement in Iran, the Israeli-Palestine conflict, and "Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program, 125 Year Later." \$5 for 10 issues [CM]

#### NEW UNIONIST

#275/Nov. 2000 through #277/Jan. 2001 (1821 University Ave W #S-116, St Paul, MN. 55104; web site: [www1.minn.net/~nup](http://www1.minn.net/~nup)) is now an 8-page monthly tabloid of the New Union Party whose fantasy is to get all workers "to unite in one rank-and-file controlled union." The November issue includes an article on "Global Warming," claiming that "the capitalist system is acting as a cork on the teapot of human inventiveness and innovation" for problems whose solutions are unprofitable, but "beneficial to the majority." The January issue argues that business cycles or "boom & bust" are endemic to capitalism. Subscriptions are still \$5/



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year. [JM]

#### NON-VIOLENT ACTIVIST

Vol 17 No. 5/September-October (2000 War Resisters League 339 Lafayette Street New York, NY 10012) is the bi-monthly magazine of the War Resisters League, covering non-violent direct action in the cause of peace and resistance to injustice around the globe. This issue includes an interesting first-hand account of the current struggle against Israeli oppression, detailing the non-violent tactics of Palestinians and how they are met with violence by Israeli forces. Chris Ney of the WRL provides an excellent analysis of the successful Bolivian uprising against International Monetary Fund/World Bank attempts to privatize drinking water in that country. Activist news from around the globe and a lively letters section round out the journal. Well worth the price. \$1.50 [AA]

#### NUKEWATCH PATHFINDER

unnumbered/Winter 2001 (POB 649, Luck, WI 54853-0649) is an 8-page anti-nuclear weapons & anti-nuclear power tabloid, documenting and encouraging "nonviolent" resistance. This issue features information on the Yucca Mountain, Nevada waste dump in "A License to Kill?" and Bonnie Urfer's survey of "ICBMs still in our Backyards" (showing the sites of the remaining 500 US land-based nuclear missiles), along with a short report from a Depleted Uranium Weapons conference in Manchester, England. Send an SASE for a sample. [JM]

#### OFF OUR BACKS

Vol.31.#1/Jan. 2001 (2337B 18th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009) is a longstanding 18-page feminist news tabloid with a strong emphasis on international coverage and lesbian separatist issues. The January issue features a brief interview with an Israeli peace activist, a description of the tactics of the Center for BioEthical Reform (purveyors of a creepy abortion = genocide project), an excerpt from the new book (edited by Diana Russell & Roberta Harmes) *Femicide in Global Perspective* on AIDS in South Africa, and Alyn Pearson's somewhat schizoid, though lucid, thoughts on hating, yet dating, men. Subscriptions are now \$25/year (11 issues). [JM]

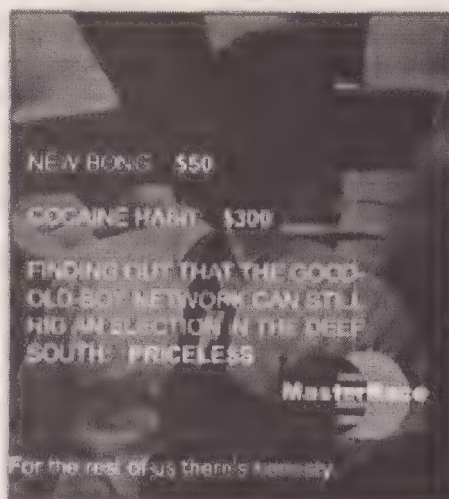
#### ONWARD

Vol.1.#3/Winter 2000-2001 (Onward, POB 2671, Gainesville, FL 32602-2671) is a 24-page newspaper of anarchist news, opinion, strategy, and theory. This is probably the best anarchist newspaper to come along in some time. The articles are readable, relevant to current events, and frequently find a way to make the reader go "aha!" Of interest in this issue is Ernesto Aguilar's article titled

"Revolutionary Barrio Organizing Confronts Cops, Electoral Politics, Racism" and Rob Augmon's "One Anarchist's Experience at the SOA." Augmon's article, which is critical of the style of SOA protests, has already generated several responses on the Internet. A special section on women in struggle includes articles on women in the EZLN (Zapatistas), women and self-defense, sexual assault in activism, and a recent gender conference where activist men hijacked the spotlight. A good source for anarchist news and opinion. \$1 for a sample. \$7-10 for one year. [CM]

#### OUR NETHERWORLD

A Zine About Social Injustice and the Prison System No. 1/Summer 2000 (Anthony Rayson c/o South Chicago ABC Zine Distr. PO Box 721 Homewood, IL



60430) is a homegrown anarchist prisoner zine chock full of information on the massive incarcerated population in the United States. Among other articles this first issue features an analysis of politically motivated torture practices in America, the substandard state of prison medical care, and statistics documenting the systemic racism fuelling imprisonment. Donations are welcome. [AA]

#### PASSIONFRUIT

A Women's Travel Journal

#6/Winter 2000 (2917 Telegraph Ave, PMB 136, Berkeley, CA 94705; web site: [www.passionfruit.com](http://www.passionfruit.com)) is a new attempt at sharing women's travel stories on more than the usual superficial travelogue/fashion/consumption level of most magazines, nonetheless political, social and historical background are strikingly absent in most. This 48-page issue opens with Terri Hinte's account of a couple of local concerts in Marienbad in "Accordian Dreams," followed a number of shorter

stories like Jennifer Hile's description of a cemetery for the wealthy amidst the slums of Manila, Lilian Liang's account of getting lost on the way to the Saqqara pyramids outside Cairo, and Lara McKinley's report on the bus system in Guatemala. The best pieces in this issue are Colleen Kaleda's account of a tour of the San Blas archipelago among the Kuna Indians and Marianne Dresser's "Waiting for the Lady: A glimpse of Burma's pro-democracy movement." Subscriptions are \$18/year. [JM]

#### PEACE MAGAZINE

Vol.17.#1/Jan.-Mar. 2001 (POB 248, Stn P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2S7, Canada) is a 32-page quarterly devoted to international analysis from a liberal/pacifist (at times even naively neo-liberal) perspective which sees "democracy...on the upswing around the world." This issue features a letter criticizing its poor coverage of Cuba and Peru—which the magazine's editors misleadingly title "Defend Castro" (when the letter's only brief mention of him is in regard to the many US attempts to assassinate him), a poorly-argued piece titled "Poverty: A Cause of War?" by Morris Miller, and a more interesting interview with a delegate to the International Criminal Court. Subscriptions are still \$17.50/year. [JM]

#### PORTRAITS FROM MEMORY: NEW ORLEANS IN THE SIXTIES

(Surregional Press, 1539 Crete St., New Orleans, LA 70119-3006; e-mail: [mesechabe@hotmail.com](mailto:mesechabe@hotmail.com); web: [www.resodance/mesechabe](http://www.resodance/mesechabe)) is a 54-page special magazine devoted to the history of activism and underground in journalism in New Orleans in the 1960s, Darlene Fife and her husband, Robert Head, edited the underground anti-war newspaper NOLA Express. In addition to covering the activism of the period, NOLA Express also published such literary luminaries as Charles Bukowski. Fife and her coterie of friends were some of the first anti-war activists in New Orleans. Being on the cutting edge of the early anti-war movement, Fife and her fellow activists were either being harassed by the local cops or the annoying local Spartacists. Their protests evolved from pickets of local government buildings to draft counseling of young men who didn't want to fight in the U.S. invasion of Vietnam. In addition to recounting the trials and tribulations of a struggling underground newspaper (remember mimeograph machines?), she paints a picture of the local sceneries, ranging from religious cult leaders to LSD advocates. A fascinating personal account of 1960s underground publishing and anti-war activism. \$12 [CM]

(continued on page 80)



## One Market Under God

***One Market Under God: Extreme Capitalism, Market Populism and the End of Economic Democracy*** by Thomas Frank (Doubleday, 2000). 432 pages, \$26.00

In social critic Thomas Frank's latest book, *One Market Under God: Extreme Capitalism, Market Populism and the End of Economic Democracy*, he deftly analyzes and attacks numerous sacred cows that Americans hold dear. From our supposedly booming economy to dreadlocked, dot-com millionaires to the all-powerful market, Frank exposes the '90s as a period of incredible consolidation of wealth for the rich. Also, you will never read a more amusing book about the stock market.

As editor of the hip, radical literary journal, the Baffler, Frank first showed up on the scene with his own novel writing style — a dash of sarcastic underground-zine-inspired attitude combined with a scholarly background and an academic vocabulary. His essays in the Baffler were widely reprinted and his work began appearing in the *Nation*, *Harpers* and the *Chicago Reader*. His first book, *The Conquest of Cool*, was about the advertising industry's co-optation of the '60s. A popular theme in much of his work, including *One Market Under God*, is the current corporate endeavor to paint billionaires and entrepreneurs as rebels, and opponents of the market or free trade, as cynical elitists.

*One Market Under God* is a lively work, establishing Frank as one of the essential critics of his generation. Particularly in the first couple of chapters, Frank nails down the political legacy of the '90s as an era of kinder, gentler, legitimized greed.

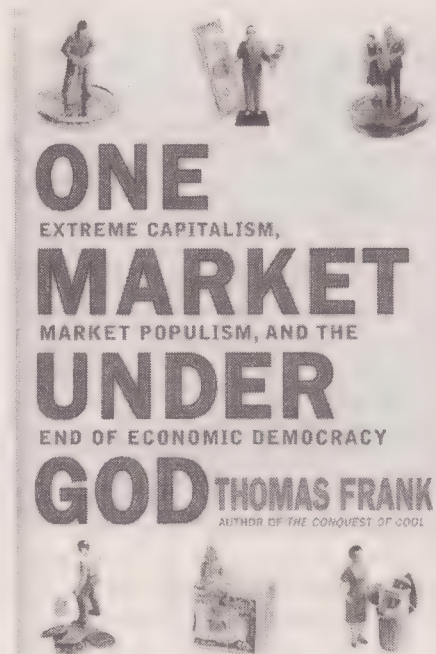
"Here the nineties were the age of the great agreement," writes Frank, "as leaders of left parties in the US and UK accommodated themselves to the free market faith of their predecessors, Reagan and Thatcher. As both Clinton and Tony Blair made spectacular public renunciations of their parties' historic principles, the opposition literally ceased to oppose."

He goes on to discuss how this consensus, that what is good for the market is good for the people, came about and gives examples of how the newfangled billion-

aires of the '90s have attempted to portray themselves as down-to-earth folk.

"Market populism encompasses such familiar set pieces," writes Frank, "as Rupert Murdoch's endless efforts to cast himself as a man of the people beset by cartoon snobs like the British aristocracy. Or Detroit's long-running use of the simple fact that Americans like cars to depict even the most practical and technical criticisms of the auto industry (seat belts, air bags, fuel efficiency, etc.) as loathsome expressions of a joyless elite."

Many of Frank's examples of neo-populist schmuck-ery are amusing, but his best



moments are when he really goes off.

"And yet the 'New Economy' is a fraud," he writes, "Thomas Friedman's formula, 'one dollar, one vote,' is not the same thing as universal suffrage, as the complex, hard-won array of rights that most Americans understand as their political heritage. Nor does it mitigate the obscenity of wealth polarization one whit when the richest people ever in history tell us that they are 'listening' to us, that theirs are 'interactive' fortunes, or that they have unusual tastes and work particularly hard. Markets may look like democracy, in that we are involved in their making, but they are fundamentally not democratic. We did not vote for Bill

Gates; we didn't all sit down one day and agree that we should only use his operating system and we should pay for it just however much he thinks is right. We do not go off to our jobs checking telephone lines or making cold calls or driving a forklift every morning because this is what we want to do; we do it because it is the only way we can afford food, shelter, and medicine. The logic of business is coercion, monopoly, and the destruction of the weak."

No friend of the stock market, Frank, who has a Ph.D in American history, goes through the stock market's calamitous historical blunders, discusses the anti-Populist tycoons from the turn of the century who "damned the public" (a fascinating bit of history) and lays down the law about who the new, user-friendly, down-home market is currently benefiting.

"However widely dispersed stock ownership may have become in recent years," he writes, "the vast majority of shares are still held by the wealthy. It is this simple, incontestable fact of American life that, more than almost anything else, has permitted the massive skewing of wealth distribution in the last two decades. Stocks are the economic engine that has generally made the rich so very much richer than the rest of us. There is no controversy or secrecy about these facts. Even an economist as partial to the 'New Economy' as Lester Thurow acknowledges that America's widening inequality can be attributed directly to the rising stock market. A full 86 percent of the market's advances in the last four years of the bull market, he points out, went to the wealthiest 10 percent of the population. The majority of the population, not owning any stock, shared in the great money handout not at all. The booming stock market of the nineties did not democratize wealth; it concentrated it."

Frank goes on to explain how the stock market has successfully improved its image over the years, leading many working people to believe that it is in fact their friend. Via best sellers by management gurus, popular autobiographies from CEOs and numerous tomes offering investment advice, he shows how various lies have been formulated, repeated ad nauseam and have made their way into every sort of estab-



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lished media. Frank must have read or skimmed 100 or so of these books and he liberally quotes the most absurd passages. Singing the praises of the market over all else, George Gilder, Thomas Friedman, Charles Handy, Peter Senge and Tom Peters come off as dangerous corporate theorists whose ideas, though they often have no basis in reality, have spread far and wide. But this section of the book is too detailed. Frank gets overly caught up in the extreme ridiculousness of these theories. There are at least 150 pages of *One Market Under God* dedicated to criticizing the very boring works of various corporate apologists and Frank's analysis of them is only slightly less boring. Frank's writing is much more vital when he occasionally shifts into the first person and relates these stories with more outrage.

"I confess: The way the word is used in market literature, I am an extremely 'cynical' person," he writes. "I doubt advertising. I scoff at brands. I do not believe that Macintoshes make you 'think different' or that Virginia Slims help you 'find your voice.' And yet I was stopped cold by what I can only call the cynicism of Nike's approach. As nearly everyone knows by now, Nike is an outfit with a certain reputation for New-Economy-style exploitation. They learned long ago that it was more profitable to move production of their shoes to the union-free and largely invisible Third World, where they could enjoy maximum 'flexibility' and, thanks to some of the most barbaric regimes on earth, pay their workers wages so small that it is difficult for Americans to understand how they stay alive. Having done that, though, Nike then proceeded to do pseudo-anthropological studies of the very Americans whose world has been shattered by the departure of operations like theirs to the lands of the 'open shop'—and to produce gritty commercials celebrating the authenticity of our poverty, our alienation, our earnest search for redemption through sport."

Near the end of the book, there's an exceptional chapter about "market populism" and how it has infected the media. A bizarre character, Al Neuharth, the tycoon behind *USA Today* and the Gannett empire, is also exposed as an evil, anti-union, faux populist who came up with the pre-

posterous "Journalism of Hope." Neuharth toured small-town USA on what he called a Buscapade, holding town meetings and trying to get to know real people for a column he wrote called "Plain Talk." While crushing unions and "silencing independent editorial voices," Gannett newspapers made a mint with its anti-intelligent, colored-masthead, homey, love-the-little-guy approach.

"The company has seamlessly welded populism and plunder," writes Frank, "covered its rapacity with an Up With People exterior. It is a uniquely American hybrid of opposites, combining a self-effacing, all-inclusive, antielitist editorial style with a shamelessly self-aggrandizing corporate culture and the no-nonsense kicking of worker ass."

More of a critic than a crusader, Frank does not propose any particular remedies for an omnipotent market. He considers *One Market Under God* to be "a history of bad ideas." But it is much more than that. A crucial document of '90s excess, *One Market Under God* is a book that readers will either hate or love depending on their social strata and their stock holdings. —Adam Bregman

### *Anarchism, Marxism, and the Future of the Left*

*Anarchism, Marxism, and the Future of the Left: Interviews and Essays, 1993-1998* by Murray Bookchin (AK Press, POB 40682, San Francisco, CA 94140-0682, and POB 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE, Scotland, 1999) 352pp., \$19.95 paper.

Murray Bookchin is one of the better known of contemporary North American anarchists. An early writer on ecology and environment, he has spent many years involved in attempting to influence the development of the green political milieu in a more radical direction. And he is the author of a steady stream of occasionally interesting books from the fifties through the present, including his classic collection of essays from the sixties titled *Post-Scarcity Anarchism*, an excellent volume on the history of the Spanish anarchist movement, and his failed attempt at writing a philo-

sophical magnum opus in *The Ecology of Freedom*.

For many anarchists who had been continuously involved and active in the anti-capitalist libertarian milieu over the last two or three decades, it came as quite a surprise when Murray Bookchin returned some of his prodigal attention back toward anarchists in the waning years of the 20th century. It was even more surprising when the quality of his renewed attention toward anarchists—beginning with publication of *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm* by AK Press in 1995—turned out to resemble old-fashioned Stalinist denunciations of anarchists much more than critical solidarity. (In *SALA* the incoherent list of accusations—liberal, fascist, yuppie, bourgeois, decadent, narcissistic, etc.—is long.)

Bookchin's latest work, *Anarchism, Marxism, and the Future of the Left*, helps to explain some of his neo-Stalinist proclivities toward trash-talking other anarchists. It begins with a nostalgic memoir of his early Stalinist and Trotskyist careers up through his conversion to anarchism and participation in events of the sixties. In an essay titled "Whither Anarchism?" he extends his incoherent fulminations on anarchist "lifestylism" into a ludicrous theory of anarchist history in which 'lifestyle anarchism' reigns in non-revolutionary times and 'social anarchism' takes over during revolutionary periods, but in which 'lifestylism' has now overgrown its role to the extent that it 'subverts the very basis for building...radical social opposition...' despite all evidence to the contrary. After which Bookchin goes on to feebly defend himself against his critics by misrepresenting them, selectively ignoring their most important criticisms (for example, he explicitly ignores an entire book of criticisms levelled by Bob Black in *Anarchy after Leftism*), and focussing on minor points of dispute—the only way he can score any debating points at all. Though throughout he continues to vilify his enemies list of 'lifestylists' and paint himself as our only possible savior from their scourge.

Who are his targets? Basically, any anarchists uninterested in perpetuating a leftism that has little to do with anarchy and much to do with Bookchin's own attempt



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to establish his ideological babies—social ecology and libertarian municipalism—as hegemonic anarchist theories. Unfortunately, though, for Bookchin, he's shown up too late on the contemporary anarchist scene with way too little of value to offer anyone outside of academia or the fringes of green politics.

Bookchin's newest tome may be most valuable for the insights it will shed on the formative years of his childhood and the many disappointments of his early political involvements—which seem to have left him embittered about a lifetime of lost opportunities, (for which he is always quick to blame others, but never himself). Unfortunately, the remainder of the book's essays and interviews may only make sense if you see the world through Bookchin's eyes as a vast conspiracy to deny him his rightful place in the pantheon of revolutionary thinkers. — *Jason McQuinn*

### *Living in the Number One Country*

*Living in the Number One Country: Reflections from a Critic of American Empire* by Herbert I. Schiller (Seven Stories Press, 140 Watts Street, New York, NY 10013) 208 pp. \$25 cloth.

This is a penetrating study of the development of the post-World War II communications industry in tandem with the hegemony of American capitalism in which Schiller, who pioneered communications studies as a discipline in the United States, mixes autobiographical reflections and analysis seamlessly. He pulls no punches charting the symbiotic growth and expansion of American economic, military, and media imperialism since World War II, but his primary subject is the present day situation—America, Empire #1—and the horrific consequences for all and sundry. Gaging the situation from a perspective that takes into account the real human costs, he ends his book dissecting the incipient threats to US capitalism, such as economic competition from the European Economic Community or the complete collapse of the empire's basket-case economies. Schiller certainly knows his stuff: the pages fairly bristle with

trenchant observations and insights. — *Allan Antliff*

### *Building the Future Today*

*Building the Future Today* by John C. Clem (Trio Publications, 3238 E. English St., Wichita, KS 67218-1119, 2001) 149pp. \$22.95 paper.

Building a home in North America today is an intimidating project. Except for those who live in on the margins in relatively unregulated regions (where it is still possible to build your own home unmolested by bureaucratic regulators), a large array of contemporary institutions virtually force most people to treat buying a home like the consumption of most other industrial goods. No serious questions are supposed to be asked about who does the building, under what conditions, who profits, how and where the materials come from, how unsafe or unhealthy they really are, whether any unused materials are recycled, what alternatives exist for material use or methods, etc.

The powerful building industry conspires with the banking industry, as well as state and local regulators, to put barrier after barrier in the way of those wishing to design and build their own homes. While even simple and obviously safe alternative materials or methods are forbidden in many areas on the principle that if mainstream industrial builders don't use them no one should.

Although there is as yet little sign that many people are interested in fighting the industrial building monopoly and its allies in favor of what should be every human's inalienable power to construct his or her own shelter however and wherever appropriate, there is an increasing self-help literature advising people (mostly aimed at the middle- to upper-class and educated) on some of the myriad design, building material and method alternatives that are most often invisible in the mainstream building industry. Partly this comes as a result of increasing concern for environmental questions, partly from renewed concerns for quality materials and design in an age

where image is far more important than substance, and partly from a few people looking back (or to other cultures in other lands) at pre- or nonindustrialized building practices.

Dana Clem's *Building the Future Today* tackles some of these questions at an elementary level in a readable, coherent way. Although he isn't concerned with the social or historical origins of our present predicament, he has compiled an introductory survey of mainstream and alternative building materials and methods with an eye towards their environmental, health and safety implications. His is by no means an exhaustive survey (leaving out, for example, timber frame and rammed-earth methods, among others), but it will be enough of a start to open many readers' eyes to the range of environmental, health and safety questions and implications hidden or unconsidered in the typical process of mainstream homebuilding. The author also provides a web site at [www.futurehometoday.com](http://www.futurehometoday.com) with promises of updated information. At the moment, however, it will be most useful for anyone interested in considering whether to buy the book, allowing free downloads of the introduction and first chapter. — *Jason McQuinn*

### *Marx in Soho*

*Marx in Soho* by Howard Zinn (South End Press, 7 Brookline St., Cambridge, MA 02139) 55 pp. \$12 paper

This slender volume is the text of a one-man play in which Karl Marx returns from the grave to deliver a monologue chronicling his life in London and a defence of his ideas in light of late 20<sup>th</sup>-century developments in the United States. Zinn also writes a preface discussing his own political evolution from Marxism to anarchism which is extremely interesting. I thoroughly enjoyed the book—the play reads so beautifully I vowed I must see it performed sometime, somewhere. Of course an imaginary monologue from the point of view of the protagonist is no substitute for history: plenty of reprehensible facts go by the board, such as Marx's pro-colonialist views or his shameless machinations against an-



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archists in the First International. Ah well, the main thing is that Zinn brings the man to life, butt boils and all, for a contemporary audience. — *Allan Antliff*

### ***Kuwasi Balagoon - A Soldier's Story***

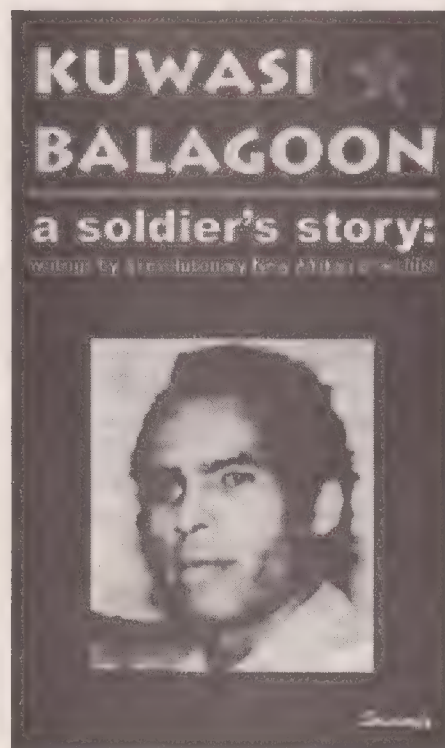
***Kuwasi Balagoon - A Soldier's Story: Writings by a Revolutionary New Afrikan Anarchist*** edited by the Solidarity Collective with tributes by David Gilbert, The New Afrikan People's Organization, Sundiata Acoli, Meg Starr and J. Sakai. (Kerplebedeb distributors, CP 63560 CCCP Van Horne, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3W 3H8) 120 pp. \$3 paper.

This is a collection of statements, letters, and a few articles by Kuwasi Balagoon, who died in prison on December 13, 1986. Balagoon became radical in the late 1960s, when many leftist Americans pinned their hopes for revolution on nationalist movements in the "third world" and the United States. This led to the formation of the African-American Black Liberation Army (BLA) and the European-American dominated Weathermen Underground (WU). The BLA fought for a "New Afrikan" homeland in the US. It embraced the idea of race-based nationalism and aligned itself with armed struggle in Vietnam and elsewhere against imperialism, and, presumably, capitalism. The WU shared the BLA position, arguing the impossibility of a revolutionary movement among the majority of Americans due to "white privilege" determined that the WU could only act as a "solidarity group" for struggles elsewhere (see Weatherman, edited by Harold Jacobs).

Beginning in the 1970s, both organizations engaged in political assassinations, bombings, and expropriations to foment their agendas, however neither had the numbers to sustain the effort beyond the 1980s. What was life like in a milieu where the colour of one's skin counted for so much? BLA supporter Meg Starr gives this description of the scene in the early 1980s. "The movement was very sectarian, defensive and hierarchical," she writes. "The 'problem of racism' was 'solved'—at least according to my sector of the left—by only

allowing white leaders to meet black leaders, and for us white followers to have almost no contact with the Black movement." Sound liberating?

Balagoon tells us he turned to anarchism after a period of long reflection on why so many national liberation movements were degenerating into dictatorships or simply collapsing. He offers the decline of New York's Black Panther Party as an example of this phenomena. In the early 1970s the local leadership began to live high off the hog on money raised by "the cadre"



for BP legal defence. They got away with it because the BP was a Marxist-Leninist organization and blind obedience to the higher-ups was its political cornerstone. "The cadre accepted their leadership and accepted their command regardless of what their intellect had or had not made clear to them," he observes. Ironically, "the true democratic process which they [the cadre] were willing to die for for the sake of their children they would not claim for themselves." This tragic state of affairs was writ large in China and the now defunct Soviet Union, "liberated nations" with a problematic record of support for anti-imperialist struggles because they were run by self-

interested Communist Party elites. An anarchist model of organizing, he concluded, was the sole guarantee of real democracy in a revolutionary movement. So far so good, but Balagoon never overcame the racist rot at the core of the BLA/WU apple. He died imagining a grotesque post-imperialist, post-capitalist US in which "Native, New Afrikan, Chicano, and Puerto Rican nationals" as well as "Whites who wish to live separately" would all get their own homelands.

In *The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism* Freddy Perlman writes that nation states are a product of capitalism, battered on racism, which frequently spawn mirror images of themselves among those they oppress. "There's no earthly reason for the descendants of the persecuted to remain persecuted when nationalism offers them the prospect of becoming persecutors"—hence the "continuing appeal" of a system which has spread the world over thanks to national liberation movements. Died in the wool of US racism, Balagoon caught a glimpse of this truth, but only a glimpse. — *Allan Antliff*

### ***Better NOT Bigger***

***Better NOT Bigger*** by Eben Fodor (New Society Publishers, P.O. Box 189, Gabriola Island, B.C. V0R 1X0, Canada). 176 pgs. pb. \$14.95 U.S.

Are you just a little fed up with subsidizing the affluent lives of suburbanites? Then read Eben Fodor's excellent guide to debunking the "something for nothing" mentality that so often makes these cancerous landscapes possible. Fodor, a community planning consultant, breaks down the issues involved with sprawl in a remarkably concise way, from the financial costs of growth in your community and the alleged benefits such as employment, to the very real environmental concerns inherent in any kind of "development."

Although every single sentence of *Better NOT Bigger* leads to a clearer understanding of the "hows" and "whys" of the suburban landscape, I found two segments in particular to be very useful. "The Twelve Big Myths of Growth" outlined all the usual assumptions as to why growth is neces-



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sary. Pro-growth arguments such as "Growth provides needed tax revenues", and "If we limit growth, housing prices will shoot up" are addressed using Fodor's well-documented evidence to the contrary. In "Discovering the real cost of growth in your community," Fodor takes the would-be concerned citizen through the often daunting process of uncovering developers' sleaziness, explaining the terms and concepts to look for when taking on sprawl in your own locality. There are specific examples, too, of cost-by-cost breakdowns for infrastructure such as new schools and sewer systems with which to compare.

Using a clear and concise writing style, Fodor highlights specific examples of sprawl from Chicago to Eugene, Oregon, to illustrate both the problems of such environments and also some solutions. Simplified diagrams and charts, including the rankings of top and bottom placed states in the Institute for Southern Studies' Combined Economic Health survey, quickly explain what could easily be dense material. Fodor's final two chapters on realistic solutions and new sustainable residential models, "Putting the brakes on growth - what works" and "The New millennium Community" are also indispensable.

Better NOT Bigger is a highly recommended manual for initiating improvement in communities. Fodor deftly explains how to start off recognizing problems and then move on towards creating solutions. This fact alone makes the guide exceptional within the body of civic design literature, which long ago accepted sprawl as something unavoidable if not altogether desirable. —

Kerry Mogg

### *Passage: Europe*

*Passage: Europe* by Richard Copeland Miller (Lodima Press, POB 367, Revere, PA 18953, 2001) 156pp. \$75.00 hardcover.

This very heavy, oversized book documents the vision of photographer Richard Copeland Miller's recent travels through Europe in 600-line screen tritone and quadtone. The book's publicity sheet announces it as "a rare and beautiful lyric poem through the medium of photography,

bring[ing] together [Miller's] profound images from the streets and countryside of Europe in a touching portrayal of the human condition." It looks to me like a highly pretentious attempt to turn a collection of too-often uninteresting, out-of-focus photographs in to a coherent work of art through expensive packaging. While some of Miller's photographs here may deserve publication, the book as a whole is disappointing. — Jason McQuinn

### *Hardlines: Social Commentary Linocut Prints*

*Hardlines: Social Commentary Linocut Prints* edited by Richard Mock. (The Plains Art Museum, 704 First Avenue North, PO Box 2338 Fargo, North Dakota 58108-2338



e-mail [museum@plainsart.ort](mailto:museum@plainsart.ort); web: [www.plainsart.org](http://www.plainsart.org)) illustrated 96 pp. \$15 paper plus 6.5% sales tax.

I am hard-pressed to think of another example of this sort of book, in which a community of children and adults have expressed their concerns through art, guided by an internationally renowned print artist. I certainly enjoy perusing *HARDLINES*, because it belies the media myths of American ignorance and apathy in page after page of socially-engaged linocut prints with captions, the bulk of which are created by chil-

dren. Children who are concerned about pollution, militarism, poverty, greed, racism and, yes, political empowerment. One senses the excitement that animated these young artists as they discovered how to express themselves in a new way, creating work that is direct, effective and moving. "Why Waste Your Time Polluting When It Kills Every Beautiful Thing?" asks Laren Arett, who illustrates her question with a wilting flower struggling to survive amidst clear cuts and desiccating toxic sludge. Why indeed, and how do we, the stewards of her future, answer her? For his part, Mock contributes an artist's statement and, in an interview with Fargo journalist Joyce Hatton, reflects on what we can learn from children's art. I will close my review with this observation from Mock: "When a cut is made in the linoleum it cannot be anything else except that cut. So the child learns that once a choice is made they have to accept its reality and incorporate it into life's pattern, just as with the pattern created in the linoleum. In this way, art making and mental development are part of the same exercise and produce in the child an awareness of the collective wholeness of life on earth and in the print." — Allan Antliff

### *A Dirt Road Rider's Trek Epic*

*Victor Vincente of America, Beyond 1991: A Dirt Road Rider's Trek Epic . . . and Other Dreams* (OYB 4686 Meridian Rd. Williamston, MI 48895) \$15.00

What can you say about a guy who renamed himself Victor "Vincente," meaning "Winning"? One thing is that he has a lot to say about himself. It's all here: his personal history as an amateur bike-racing star in the 1960s, his path-breaking mountain bike races of the early 1980s, and finally, his "epic mountain bike poem, *A Dirt Road Riders' Trek Epic!*" Vincente's torturous poem spans many pages before you hit a thick wad of photocopies entitled "The Legend of VVA: Newspaper, Magazine and Bulletin Reprints." About the only saving grace of this publication is that the binding spits when you open it, making recycling a snap. — Allan Antliff



## *Breaking the Bank & Alive! in the Streets*

Reviewed by Jason McQuinn

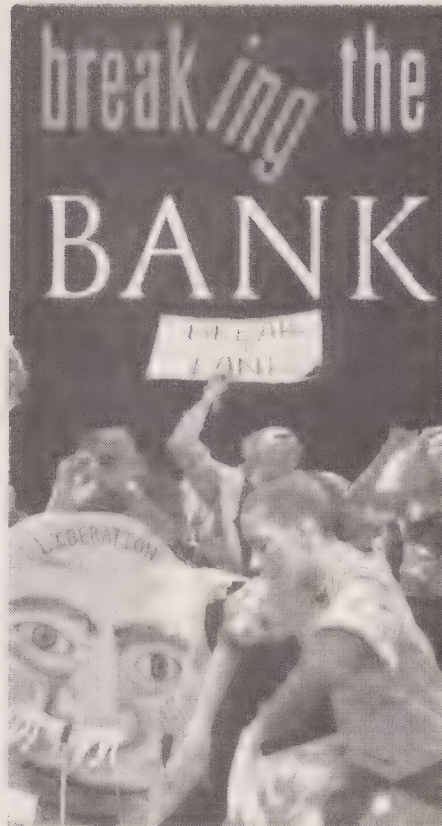
***Breaking the Bank*** (produced by Deep Dish TV Network and the Independent Media Center-DC with Big Noise Productions, Changing America, Deep Dish TV, FreeSpeech TV, Headwaters Action Video Collective, Paper Tiger TV, Sleeping Giant, VideoActiv and Whispered Media; available from: Whispered Media, POB 40130, San Francisco, CA 94140, [whisperedmedia.org](http://whisperedmedia.org), 2000) 74 minute video, \$25.00 + \$3p&h for individuals, \$15 + \$3p&h low income, \$150 + \$3p&h for libraries/institutions.

***Alive! in the Streets: DNC 2000*** (Cascadia Media Collective, POB 703, Eugene, OR 97440, [www.cascadiamedia.org](http://www.cascadiamedia.org), 2000) 30 minute video, \$15.00.

The biggest alternative media success story since the Seattle blockade of the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in November, 1999, has been the birth, spread and growth of Independent Media Centers (IMCs) around North America and around the world. *Breaking the Bank* is a demonstration of just how incredibly effective IMCs can be in documenting and explaining the current wave of anti-globalization demonstrations aimed at the WTO, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB). While *Breaking the Bank* is the creation of a network of video projects, it wouldn't have come together if it wasn't for the street-level organizing done by the Indymedia Center-DC (which itself, is the feature of a short trailer to the video titled "Inside IMC-DC").

In April 2000 the International Monetary Fund and World Bank met in Washington, DC. Starting at the intersection of 18th & I at dawn with a street-level affinity group discussion of where to go and what to do, the video effectively integrates shots of the blockades and explanations of the most important problems of globalization, all while giving a variety of demonstrators repeated chances to comment on the protests from their individual perspectives.

Unlike *Showdown in Seattle*—on the anti-WTO protests of November 1999—produced by the same groups, *Breaking the Bank* is both carefully edited to a more reasonable length and very well balanced, integrating a whole range of images of opposition in the streets with a virtual video teach-in on the IMF and World Bank by people like Journalist Pratap Chatterjee, policy director for Food First Anuradha Mittal, President of the Rainforest Action Network Randy Hayes, and former World Bank consultant (1982) Stan Andrews,



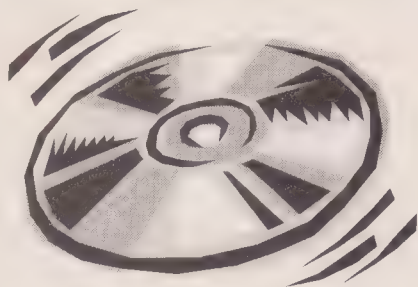
among many others. Demonstrators consulted—most apparently students—range from a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and one from the Young Communist League to a black bloc protester, and from apparently unaffiliated youths to local DC activists and DC homeless.

*Breaking the Bank* points out that World Bank and IMF were set up shortly after WWII, originally to help in reconstructing Europe, later oriented towards development in Third World countries in order to integrate them into (and subordinate them to) the international industrial economy. To the latter end, the IMF often makes loans to national governments in the name of alleviating poverty, but actually designed to benefit both multinational corporations and local elites, while leaving the poor out in the cold at best, or more often disrupting their communities and destroying their environment. Then, once governments fail to make their debt payments (often due to their incompetence, inability to compete in international markets, economic downturns, or even deliberate fraud), the IMF refinances with short-term loans conditioned on the national imposition of "structural adjustment programs" (SAPs). SAPs usually include requirements to devalue currencies, reduce social spending, privatization of utilities, and end social subsidies and price controls, while encouraging environmental despoliation (through increased mining & deforestation, export-oriented agriculture, undermining traditional subsistence economies, the damming of rivers, etc.). Ultimately and inevitably, the most spectacular "successes" of the IMF and World Bank (from their points of view) in encouraging massive industrial development and integration into the world capitalist economy have also often involved the increasing immiseration of whole populations.

To the great credit of the videographers and producers, *Breaking the Bank* doesn't attempt to artificially portray a unified, coherent anti-globalization movement where none exists. With a diversity of voices included there is also a range of opinion revealing the cross-purposes of many participants, which shows up most clearly in the conflicting perspectives of those professing ideologies of non-vio

*(continued on page 82)*





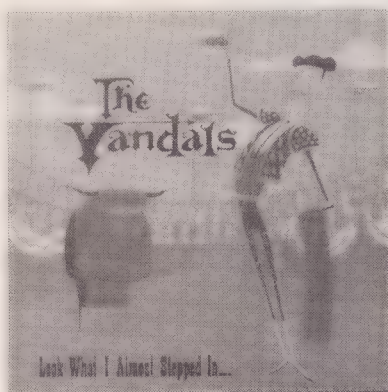
## Alternative CDs, Records & Tapes

### GLASSOLINE - Cellophane (CD)

(Xenon Records, PO Box 4654, Woodbridge, VA 22194-4654; website: [www.glassoline.com](http://www.glassoline.com))

After chugging along the DC scene for a couple of years with mixed results, Glassoline has recently revamped the line-up bringing in a brand new guitarist and new lead singer. *Cellophane* shows the new band with a grittier, more rocking sound loaded with plenty of monster hooks. There's also just enough power-pop sensibilities thrown into the mix that actually embellishes rather than dilutes the edgier, more intense direction the band appears to be taking. New guitarist Sean Fisher is deftly able to weave playful rhythms around the more pop-oriented tunes and effortlessly rips into searing guitar solos giving a couple of the cuts an almost 70's-ish guitar rock sound. New vocalist Jessi Lee has more vocal

chops and a feistier presence than their previous singer, and the rhythm section is sharp as ever. If this record is a taste of things to come, this outfit may have finally hit upon a workable and engaging formula. [TW]



### THE VANDALS - Look What I Almost Stepped In... (CD)

(Nitro Records; website: [www.nitrorecords.com](http://www.nitrorecords.com))

What you will step into here is the follow-up to their 1998 record "Hitler Bad, Vandals Good" which sees the band offering 14 songs of melodic, super-tight, energetic punk tunes. This record shows the Vandals have evolved over the years and moved into the punk-

pop mainstream. The record is certainly accessible but the band continues the tradition of sporting hilarious lyrics and an infectious sense of fun. A sharp, entertaining record. [TW]

### POST AMERIKAN

Vol. 30, #1/Feb.-March 2001 (POB 3452, Bloomington, IN 61702) is a long-running bi-monthly, 20-page community-oriented, alternative tabloid. This issue includes the usual eclectic range of content, from a cover ad parody for George Bush (using a MasterCard logo transformed into "MasterRace") to interesting articles on the 25th anniversary of the car-bomb murder of Arizona journalist-legend Don Bolles (by Steve LaPrade) and on cordwood masonry building (by Nikolai Zarick). Subscriptions are a cheap \$6/year. [JM]

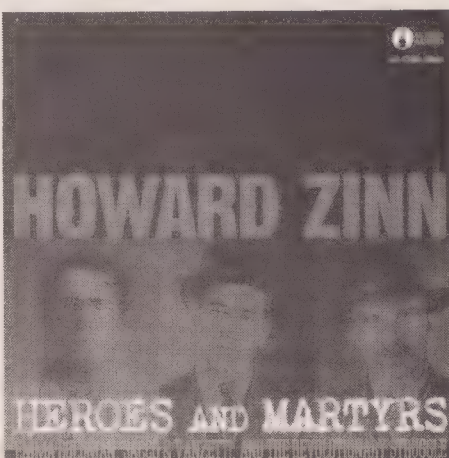
### PRISON LEGAL NEWS

Vol. 12 no. 10/October 2000 (2400 NW 80th Street PMB 148 Seattle, WA 98117) is a monthly magazine devoted to prisons and prisoners in the United States. There is plenty in each issue on administrative injustices, corruption, prison brutality, jail-house torture and the like. This issue reports numerous cases, including the death of James Livingston, a man with a history of mental illness who died in jail after being strapped to a "restraining chair" and repeatedly pepper sprayed. Court victories are covered and a regular news-in-brief column also keeps readers up to date with items such as the recent sentencing of a Corcoran, California prison guard for soliciting to commit murder (he offered \$1,000 for the hit). 12 issues, \$25 for individuals/\$18 for prisoners. [AA]

### THE PROGRESSIVE REVIEW

#### Washington's Most Unofficial Source

#368/Dec. 2001 (1312 18th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036; web site: <http://prorev.com>; e-mail: [news@prorev.com](mailto:news@prorev.com)) is a 12-page bimonthly newsletter covering the geographical seat of U.S. government power from a "progressive," pro-capitalist perspective. The December issue covers the long, corrupt history of rigged U.S. elections. Sample copies are \$3; subscriptions are \$18/year. [JM]



### Howard Zinn, Heroes and Martyrs: Emma Goldman, Sacco and Vanzetti, and the Revolutionary Struggle

2 CD set, 101 minutes AK Press/Alternative Tentacles PO Box 40682 San Francisco, CA 94140-0682 \$20.00

Like many, I am a great fan of anarchist historian Howard Zinn's *A Peoples' History of the United States*. Zinn is a gifted writer and his desire to be accessible comes through in these CDs, however as he rambles on in his conversational way one gets the distinct impression he never learned how to effectively

lecture. Or perhaps he ceased caring about a tightly focussed delivery when he retired from teaching. Maybe the people laughing indulgently as he confesses he assumed (wrongly) that they knew absolutely nothing about American anarchists Emma Goldman or Sacco and Vanzetti were not as bored silly as I was while I listened to these CDs. Zinn chats about the basics, period. Those looking for incisiveness had best go elsewhere, say, to historian Paul Avrich's *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background* or Emma Goldman's autobiography, *Living My Life*. -  
*Allan Antliff*



## RADICAL MIDDLE

Vol.2,#9/Nov.-Dec. 2000 (POB 57100, Washington, DC 20037; web: [www.radicalmiddle.com](http://www.radicalmiddle.com)) is a fairly new 8-page, (almost) monthly newsletter from Mark Satin (formerly author of an irritatingly superficial book on Green Politics, and editor/publisher of New Options newsletter), who as best I can tell is now advocating a sort of marriage of the human potential movement and neoliberalism. This issue focusses entirely on "Confronting the Social Causes of Psychological Depression," a subject Satin considers "too taboo" for mainstream media to explore, although his own concern is pretty shallow, evaluating the phenomenon using the typical assumptions of capitalist institutions and values. In actuality, severe depression should be an expected mass response to the accelerating destruction of community, folk culture, individual autonomy and freedom, and the natural environment in a process in which the vast majority of people feel completely powerless to do anything at all about it. Satin's responses to depression seem to me like offering band-aids to gunshot victims. Subscriptions are \$36/year/10 issues. [JM]

## SKATEDORK

#4/Fall/Winter 2000 (221 Spring Ridge Dr, Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922) is a 36-page collection of personal stories about skateboarding. Most of the stories about these thrill-seekers are quite entertaining and Joe Griego's "Show Me the Love" gives you a pretty good sense of the "rush" skaters enjoy. Send \$2 for a sample copy. [TW]

## SOCIAL ANARCHISM

### A Journal of Theory and Practice

#28 & #29/2000 (Atlantic Center for Research and Education, 2473 Maryland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218; web site: [www.nothingness.org/sociala/](http://www.nothingness.org/sociala/); e-mail: [sociala@nothingness.org](mailto:sociala@nothingness.org)) is a 96-page biannual journal with something of an academic orientation (contributors are most often faculty or students, etc.). Issue #29 features Institute for Anarchist Studies director Rebecca DeWitt's "An Anarchist Response to Seattle: What Shall We Do with Anarchism?" and Henry Rosemont, Jr.'s "U.S. Foreign Policy: The Execution of Human Rights" (a decent overview of U.S. crimes against humanity, though he ends up arguing that anarchists should vote for lesser evil regimes), along with Robert Graham's survey of the flawed opposition to Murray Bookchin's demagoguery in "Broken Promises." As usual there are also many book reviews—in this issue, most notably Susan White's lengthy, fawning review of Richard Porton's notably flawed *Film and the Anarchist Imagination*. Single copy \$5.00; subscriptions \$16/4 issues or \$25/4 issues (overseas). [JM]

## SOO TO SPEAK

### A feminist journal of language and art

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**www.infoshop.org** - Your guide to online anarchy.

University Drive, MS 2d6, Fairfax, VA 22030-4444) is a biannual, 120-page journal of poetry, fiction, essays and graphic art. This issue features "Some Thoughts on What's Wrong with Feminist Theory Today" by Carol Hanisch, short fiction by Katherin Nolte, Peggy Duffy and Kim Jensen. Single copies are \$6; subscriptions are \$11/year. [JM]

## STUCK IN TRAFFIC

#34/October 2000 ([powers@attglobal.net](mailto:powers@attglobal.net)) 16 pages of observations about 'current events' like debating the bill on U.S trade with China, Napster, and reviews of commercial cultural product such as "Hollow Man". Neither bad nor particularly interesting or original. \$1/issue, subscriptions \$10/year. (KM)

## SUBTERRAIN

#30/undated (POB 3008 MPO, Vancouver, BC, V6B 3X5, Canada; e-mail: [subter@portal.ca](mailto:subter@portal.ca); web site: [www.anvilpress.com](http://www.anvilpress.com)) is a 44-page quarterly literary

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magazine featuring a mixture of fiction, poetry, commentary and visual art. This issue features fiction by Adam Schroeder, Tom Henry and Matthew Firth, along with a couple childhood reminiscences by Ryszard Dubanski and John Moore. Subscriptions are \$15/year (3 issues). [JM]

## THIS

### Because Everything is Political

Vol.34,#4/Jan.-Feb. 2001 (#396-401 Richmond St W, Toronto, Ontario M5V 3A8, Canada; email: [thismag@web.net](mailto:thismag@web.net); web site: [www.thismag.org](http://www.thismag.org)) is a well-produced 44-page magazine with a liberal to leftist slant. This issue includes a recommended listing of "7 Habits of Highly Effective Nations" (from early childhood education to slowing down the production of garbage), and an interesting photo-essay on street-vending in Malawi by Chris Osler. Subscriptions are \$24/year. [JM]



## REVIEWS

### Alternative Press Videos

*continued from page 79*

lence and those more interested in directly confronting and resisting capitalism and the state.

One student, Brad Janzen (identified only as from the University of Oklahoma) provocatively blurts out, "We're not about property destruction. We're not about hurting people with violence and stuff, we're just about nonviolent resistance to the corporate aggression that they're trying to push on us." This is followed with shots of a symbolic blockade of an intersection by people linking hands, tying multiple pieces of yarn across the street, while chanting and singing. After which an unidentified man shouts, "She just talked to the police and communicated that this is a nonviolent protest. They said they're not going to do anything to us any time soon...."

It is extremely important that the manifold illusions of many protesters (and especially protest organizers) and their frequent preference for collusion with cops over consistent confrontation has been so well documented. However, at the same time that *Breaking the Bank* reveals the poverty of analysis shared by so many protesters, it sometimes fails to make clear their ultimate impotence in the face of successful police maneuvering. For example, the video inexplicably leaves unchallenged one protester's statement that, "The reports we've been getting is that we've been really successful, that we've secured a perimeter around the IMF/WB meeting...." What is left out is the fact that the vast majority of delegates had already made it to the meeting before the relatively meaningless perimeter was finally "secured." On the other hand, the video does a good job of documenting the contemptuous police raid of the protesters' "convergence space" meeting place (on the basis of obviously bogus complaints),

and the (unconstitutional, but effective) pre-emptive arrests of over 600 people at an anti-prison march days before the planned IMF/WB blockade.

Ultimately, the video also does an excellent job portraying the undeniable energy, creativity and wit of protesters, despite all their illusions. Along with documentation of the usual, unprovoked police beatings of unresisting activists, there are plenty of shots of unrestrained dancing, music and singing, giant puppets in the streets, and a few especially clever chants, like one directed at people turned away from the blockade: "Hey, How're you doing? Sorry you can't get through. Leave our

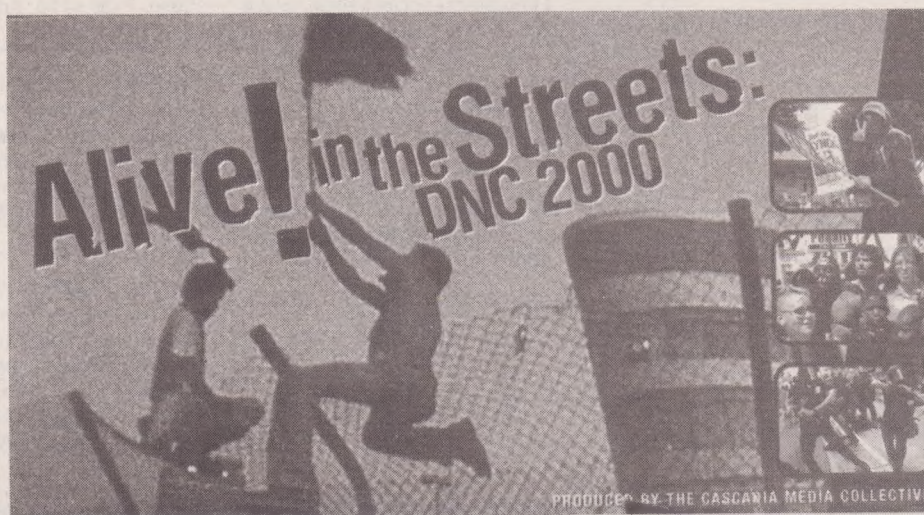
In many ways, the Democratic National Convention isn't as easy for protesters to pin down as the IMF and World Bank. When protesters range from supporters of Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader to anti-electoralists like the anarchists, there is simply no common ground for an approach anywhere near that of the DC goal of shutting down the entire meeting. Instead the weeks' actions more resembled a smorgasbord of single issue protests and cultural events, from the march for the U'Wa people of Colombia (especially significant, given that Al Gore owns a huge amount of stock in Occidental Petroleum, whose insistent oil exploration and

intention to drill threatens the entire U'Wa way of life) to the march in support for death-row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal, and from the Critical Mass bike ride to the Rage Against the Machine concert.

Along with the increased number of special effects, there are also fewer on-the-street comments from participants here. Partly

this is a result of the shorter length of *Alive! in the Streets* at 30 minutes (less than half the length of *Breaking the Bank*). But it must also reflect the choices of the videographers and producers involved.

While *Alive! in the Streets* is both lively and interesting, providing a good, quick overview of the week of DNC protests, *Breaking the Bank* is overall much more compelling, and much more involving for the viewer. Both videos ought to be shown throughout North America (and the rest of the world)—at the least as correctives to the completely one-sided portrayals and misreporting of the mainstream, corporate media. But I highly recommend that APR readers consider going out of your way to see *Breaking the Bank* at any opportunity. It may be the most important radical video of the year.



name and your number and we'll get back to you."

In *Alive! in the Streets: DNC 2000*, documenting protests at the Democratic National Convention later last summer, the Cascadia Media Collective was faced with a very different series of events and chose a different mode of presentation. From the opening song by Bonnie Raitt and the opening speech by John Trudell (on power vs. authority), *Alive! in the Streets* uses more quick cuts and video effects to cover a wider range of events without much central focus. Without the coherence given *Breaking the Bank* by the fact that protesters were united in choosing a highly specialized target and goal (even in the absence of shared theory and tactics), *Alive! in the Streets* settles for a necessarily more superficial treatment of the week's protests.



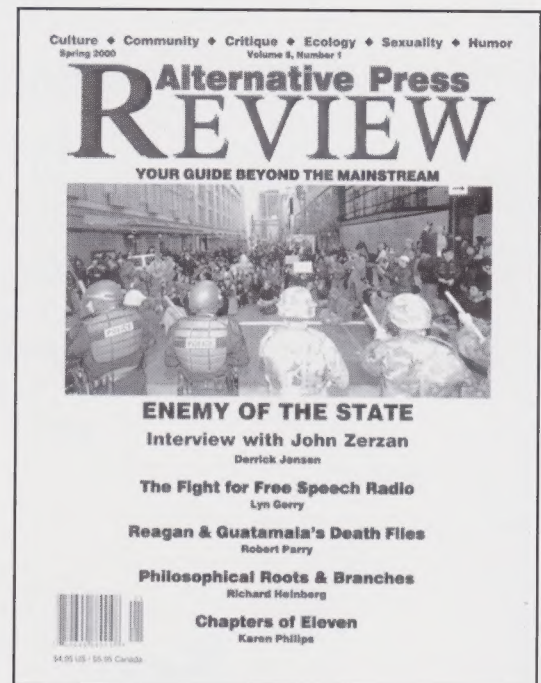
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